

MOHAMMED ALI

THE AWAKENING OF MODERN EGYPT

By

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Illustrated with maps and plates

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PREFACE

THE original idea of writing this narrative in English started some thirty years ago when, under the inspiring guidance of Professor Sir Charles Kingsley Webster, I was preparing for my Honours Degree in Modern History at Liverpool University. To Professor Webster and to his predecessor, the late Professor Ramsay Muir, I am indebted for all that the reader may find commendable in tbis treatise.

Back in Egypt I felt it my duty to translate my acquirements into Arabic with only occasional articles or lectures in English, until the critical year of 1942 when both Egyptians and English were being drawn closer together by the tension and the awe-inspiring suspense before and during the decisive battle of El Alamein. At that time the Anglo-Egyptian Union in Cairo arranged a series of lectures on national subjects, and to me was allotted the advent of mordern Egyptian nationalism. The encouragement I then received from some worthy friends provided the impetus which, in the hope of popularising and elucidating to the English speaking world the question of modern Egypt, set me to work on a subject very dear to my heart.

The inexhaustible sources, local and foreign, from which writers on modern Egypt can draw their information would have served me in writing a far more ambitious work. But omitting superfluous details which tend to make history cumulative and unwieldy, I have been more concerned in this narrative with the interpretations of the main historical facts than in the marshalling of them to the reader.

Only when exposing the attitude of the Powers towards Mohammed Ali during the crisis of 1832—1841 did I take stock of the orininal documents which I had once studied in detail.

On the whole, however, the reader will find in this book that the national aspect as distinct from the European bearing

of my subject has been stressed more than is usually done by European writers.

It is only by knowing and understanding each other better that nations can become united in their efforts to foster peace and amity among the peoples of the world. And, in my opinion, it is the nationals of a country who are the best fitted to express the true feelings and reactions of their fellow-countrymen to the ideas and the events that confront them.

If, therefore, the reader may be able to form by the instrumentality of this book a fairly clear and just idea of the efforts made by Egypt and its rulers in modern times towards progress and the advancement of human interests not only in Egypt and the Sudan but also in the Arab world, then this work will not have been written in vain.

My special thanks are due to my friend, Mr. A. C. Cawley, lecturer in English at Sheffield University who kindly read the greater part of the manuscript. And to other friends for encouragement and advice.

M. RIFAAT

Heliopolis, Egypt.
November, 1946.



The Silver Fountain presented to Mohammed Ali by the East India Company

CHAPTER I

THE IMPACT OF NAPOLEON

TOWARDS the end of the eighteenth century Egypt was still in a deep slumber—a slumber that had lasted for three hundred years. It began in the sixteenth century, when the trade route with the East ceased to pass through Egypt and the Red Sea, and moved from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic round the Cape of Good Hope, which had been discovered by the Portuguese da Gama in 1948. It continued until the end of the eighteenth century when, in May 1798, General Napoleon Bonaparte of France, with the biggest maritime expedition that had crossed the Mediterranean since the Crusaders set sail from Toulon for the East. The expedition was composed of three hundred vessels, of which thirteen were *ships of the line*, some carrying as many as a hundred and twenty guns. The men numbered 32,000, among whom were some of France's best soldiers.

Napoleon had with him about a hundred savants—professors, orientalists, scientists, technicians, inventors, interpreters, printers and artists—all moved with the same zeal to serve under the brilliant young general, whose schemes envisaged a blow at England by gaining control of Egypt and on that base building a French empire in the Near and Middle East.

The Egypt whose civilisation and riches had given rise to the legendary splendours of the Thousand and One Nights had been forgotten, and its strategic importance between East and West was not universally recognised, so that when Bonaparte set sail for Egypt, the world wondered what he intended. Even his daring rival, Nelson, the English admiral, could not be certain of the destination of Bonaparte's expedition, but while Bonaparte was breaking his voyage to seize the island of Malta, which he realised was the stepping-stone to Egypt and to the mastery of the Mediterranean, Nelson

made for the Levant as fast as he could. The wily French general managed to escape the vigilance of the English by sailing close to the coast of Africa, by taking care not to sail by day, and by using a dozen other stratagems. But the English had realised that they were competing in a race for the East, and Nelson succeeded in reaching Alexandria first.

He inquired from the Governor about the French, and finding no trace of them there, set sail northwards, in the hope of finding them at Alexandretta. Three days later, on 1 July 1798, Bonaparte landed at Marabout to the west of Alexandria, where for the first time he heard the news of Nelson's search for him. He therefore lost no time in disembarking his forces, leaving his ships in a rather exposed position in the Bay of Abu Kir.

Napoleon's first concern was to do away with Egypt's obnoxious masters, the Mameluke Beys with Murad and Ibrahim at their head. He found little difficulty in occupying Alexandria after a resistance which lasted only five days. It cost the French forty men, whose bodies Napoleon had buried at the foot of Pompey's Pillar, and ordered their names to be inscribed on it to commemorate the entry of the French into Alexandria.

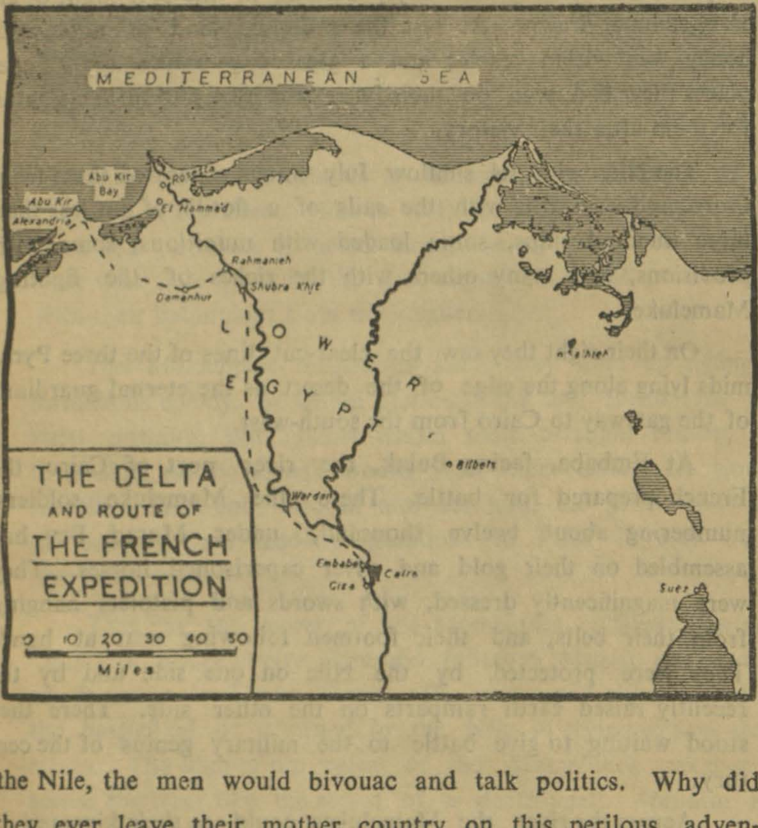
On July 9 he set out for Cairo marching along the western branch of the Nile through Damanhur, Rahmaniya, Shubrakhit and Embaba.

The journey of Bonaparte's men through the scorched earth in the barren month of July entailed unheard-of hardships. The men who expected to see cities and palaces that would rival what they had seen in Lombardy saw only deserted villages and squalid mud huts. Alexandria itself was not much better than a poor village with 7,000 inhabitants. Instead of the riches and plenty they were promised, Napoleon's men had to march for a fortnight without even the necessary bread to eat.

To add to their discomfiture they were continually harassed by the warring Arabs, who attacked them intermittently from the borders of the desert. It was for this reason that the military genius of Bonaparte devised the famous square formations to enable him to counter-attack any sudden advance against his forces from any direction. In case of actual combat the enemy

was lured inside the squares, and then volleys of fire would rain on him from the four sides of the moving quadrangle. It was this novel formation of the infantry that beat the advanced guards of the Mamelukes who intercepted the expedition at Shubrakhit on their way to Cairo.

Even this first success could not appease the invaders. So disappointed were the men that they clandestinely talked of retreat and desertion. At night after their evening plunge into



THE DELTA AND ROUTE OF THE FRENCH EXPEDITION

the Nile, the men would bivouac and talk politics. Why did they ever leave their mother country on this perilous adventure ? Was the Government of the Directory trying to deport them ? Might not Egypt prove to be a trap laid for the French and their leader, whom they nicknamed "Bon a trappe" ? And, hearing of their discontent, Napoleon would visit them in their tents and try to console them with his comforting

words. He would tell them the story of Egypt, the granary of the ancient world, the Egypt of Alexander the Great and of the Roman legions whom they should imitate and try to emulate.

The expedition plodded its way along the western bank of the Rosetta branch, until at last after a journey of fourteen days they came to the apex of the Delta.

Early one morning the men saw on the horizon the slender forms of the four hundred minarets of Cairo towering gracefully into the blue sky and shyly bathing in the soft light of an early summer drawn. At last the promised land of milk and honey was within reach; and a great city unlike any of the places they had seen on their way was ready to open its gates for them after their victory.

The Nile with its shallow July waters separated them from Cairo, and was white with the sails of a flotilla of not less than three hundred ships, some loaded with munitions, some with provisions, and many others with the riches of the fighting Mamelukes.

On their right they saw the clear-cut lines of the three Pyramids lying along the edge of the desert as the eternal guardians of the gateway to Cairo from the south-west.

At Embaba, facing Bulak, the river port of Cairo, the French prepared for battle. There the Mameluke soldiers, numbering about twelve thousand, under Murad Bey had assembled on their gold and silver caparisoned horses. They were magnificently dressed, with swords and pistolets hanging from their belts, and their footmen following near at hand. They were protected by the Nile on one side and by the recently raised earth ramparts on the other side. There they stood waiting to give battle to the military genius of the century.

Across the river the Mamelukes could see their kinsmen in Bulak standing with their womenfolk and children all along the bank of the Nile. The men and boys were rushing about in all directions like demented beings, and shouting noisy prayers to God to give His judgment in their favour against the infidels.

On the French side, there were only the Pyramids to watch from afar the invaders with their splendid array of men and

metal. To the Pyramids Napoleon pointed a resolute finger, and addressing his soldiers just before the battle pronounced his famous words: "*Soldats! Quarante siecles vous regardent!* —Soldiers! Forty centuries behold you!"

That day of 21 July 1798 both sides stood opposite each other. The intrepid Mamelukes advanced first, with Murad at their head proving himself equal to the occasion. The French manoeuvred with a view to edging them away from their newly raised defences, and then pushing them either towards the river or towards the desert in the south. It was an unequal fight—a duel between fire and steel on one side and horse and sword on the other; between collective discipline and individual bravery; between calculated science and primitive intuition.

The result of that Battle of Embaba, or the Battle of the Pyramids as the French like to call it, was never in any doubt. Even the populace gathered along the opposite bank of the river were only awaiting the first signal of defeat to flee away with their belongings from the invaders.

The Mamelukes themselves knew they were up against a formidable enemy, of whose tactics, guns and formations they knew nothing, and against whom their personal bravery and their skill on horseback would avail them little. No wonder therefore that both Murad and Ibrahim, the joint masters of the country, had made preparations to leave it even before the battle started.

That day the power of the Mamelukes collapsed for ever. Only four out of twelve thousand followed Murad under cover of darkness to Upper Egypt. The rest were either killed on the battlefield or drowned in the Nile in trying to save themselves. The echo of the defeat of the Mamelukes reverberated across the river like the sound of a death-knell. Ibrahim Bey, who was waiting impatiently with the Turkish Pasha and a crowd of the notables, lost no time in escaping northwards with more than a thousand followers. Then the Cairenes presented a most pitiable sight. With their masters and rulers fleeing for their lives, leaving behind them their houses, their furniture and their goods, the common people followed suit. They also escaped to the desert, but only to be pillaged by the Bedouin marauders and sent back to the city almost naked.

Thieves broke into the shops and houses and looted everything they found.

The battlefield was strewn with the bodies of ten thousand Mamelukes, Turks and Egyptians. On the river the ships were ablaze and the flames threw as sinister glow on the sides of the Pyramids. In the water floated the bodies of the valiant Mamelukes who were drowned in trying to cross the river on their horses. Their bodies were later carried by the current downstream to spread the news of the rout of the Mamelukes.

The French, who only lost three hundred in the battle, were soon recompensed for their previous sufferings. In the enemy camp after the battle they found plenty to eat and to plunder. The wealth that the Mamelukes used to carry in their leather belts round their bodies fell to the fortunate soldiers. When they learned this about the Mamelukes they began to fish for their bodies in the water.

Napoleon and his staff, who were quartered in Murad Bey's palace at Giza, now tackled the problem of crossing the river to take possession of Cairo. Their anxiety was great, because their flotilla coming up from Rosetta was hampered on its way by the low waters of the Nile at this season. But their anxiety was soon relieved when it transpired that Ibrahim Bey with his Mamelukes, instead of concentrating their forces on the right bank of the river to make a last stand before giving up Cairo, was fleeing with his followers northwards towards Palestine and Syria, leaving Cairo to the pillagers inside and to the invaders outside.

Two days later a delegation from Cairo called on Napoleon to assure him of Cairo's submission.

Thus was Egypt rudely jolted, from her slumber by the impact of French cannon and the pungent smell of powder ; and Bonaparte, having won the day, set out to consolidate his victory by posing as Egypt's saviour and importer of the freedom and equality of the Revolution. For this reason he brought with him from Rome the first printing-press with Arabic type, and with the help of some Levantines whom he had released from imprisonment in Malta, he prepared his first epistle to Egypt.

In that document, which has since become of historical im-

portance, Napoleon, as a true son of the French Revolution, imparted to Egypt all that was thrilling and dazzling in the Rights of Man.

He did not content himself with singing the praises of Egypt; he also volunteered to initiate her into the art of ruling her house according to the latest precepts of the French Revolution. "All men are equal," so ran the epistle, "they only differ in so far as their intellects and moral virtues distinguish them from one another. . . .In future all Egyptians will be eligible to all posts and the conduct of affairs shall be entrusted to those endowed most with knowledge, wisdom and virtue."

Against Egypt's former masters, the Mamelukes, Bonaparte made a violent attack. "For quite a long time these hordes of slaves purchased from Georgia and the Caucasus have tyrannised Egypt, one of the most charming countries in the world. If Egypt is leased to them by God, let them submit the title-deed they hold from Almighty! But God is just and merciful to the people. He hath ordained that their power shall come to an end."

Before ending this epistle he made it clear that he was serious in his advances, and that if he were thwarted he would wreak vengeance on the culprits. "Happy! three times happy, are those who side with us! They will prosper in wealth and in rank. Happy also are those who stand neutral, for in time they will know us better and get into line with us. But woe unto them who carry arms for the Mamelukes against us! They shall perish without mercy."

The whole political and social structure of the nation seemed to have been overthrown by the French victory. Everything was rudely shaken except men's faith in Islam and in Allah, who had punished them for their sins by giving victory over them to the French infidels. The whole rotten fabric of government tottered at the touch of the French. The Turkish *faineant* governor refused to listen to Napoleon's entreaties for him to stay, and left Cairo with the Mameluke leader, Ibrahim Bey, and his followers. The remnants fled in all directions, but most of them followed Murad Bey in Upper Egypt and tried to organise a sort of guerrilla warfare against the invaders who were trying to occupy the upper country.

The Turkish chief judge soon followed suit and joined the emigres to Syria. The Turkish civil officers relinquished their posts and kept to their houses. There only remained in the land the fellaheen, tied down like cattle to the land and politically of no consequence whatever; the Copts or Christian Egyptians, mostly fellaheen also, but some of them entrusted by the Turks and Mamelukes with the survey of land, accounts and bookkeeping; and above all the merchants in the big towns, the heads of trade guilds, and the sheikhs of Al Azhar University, the only Egyptians of any consequence in those days.

The sheikhs of Al Azhar, like the clergy of the Middle Ages, found power and wealth in the practice and sanctity of their vocation. They were the accredited leaders of the populace, to whom the people would resort in times of suffering and unrest. They were the sole repositories of peace, knowledge and justice in the country, and on them Napoleon decided to build his new regime.

In essence the regime consisted in calling to power the national elements and in making them serve the interests of the French in opposition to those of the Mamelukes and Turks. Napoleon was therefore the first governor in modern times to think of Egyptians as a nation distinct from both Turks and Mamelukes.

Napoleon established a purely national divan or council composed of nine grand sheikhs chosen from amongst the sheikhs of Al Azhar. A tenth sheikh was appointed as secretary, and it was left to the members to choose their own president by adopting the system of secret ballot.

In the military order dated July 25 establishing the divan, Napoleon decreed that "the members shall appoint two officers to superintend the police and three officials to control the markets and to be responsible for provisioning the capital, and three others to undertake the burial of the dead in Cairo and its suburbs." In another article it was specified that three members of the divan should be in attendance regularly.

The provinces were similarly governed. There also the French military governor was assisted by a national divan composed of seven councillors.

Needless to say, the divans were only advisory bodies and

their deliberations were made in the presence of a French commissioner. Members were made to swear fealty to the French Republic and not to harm the French in any way.

Thus were the native Egyptians of those days initiated into the art of government, much to their dislike. Perhaps they hated to associate themselves with the invaders in the actual government of the country. But there can be no doubt that the Egyptians at that time were complete strangers in regard to the government of their country. When Napoleon asked the members of the divan to chose competent Egyptians to control the police and superintend the markets, the sheikhs were shocked at the idea. Only the Mamelukes and Turks, they said, could inspire fear and command respect and obedience from the people. Napoleon had to give way on this point and Turks were appointed to the posts. But when the post of chief judge became vacant through the desertion of its occupant, Napoleon decided that an Egyptian sheikh should be elected to this high office. A sheikh, said Napoleon, would at least know Arabic, and thus listen intelligently to the grievances of the litigants without the intermediary of a third person. The sheikhs wavered for a while and thought it illegal that anyone other than the representative of the Sultan could pronounce the word of law in the court. They even advised that the son of the late chief judge, a mere boy of seventeen, should take the post vacated by his father in accordance with feudal custom. Bonaparte would not give way, and reminded the sheikhs that he was only following the custom observed in the golden days of Islam, when the Caliphs used to choose judges from among the most learned of the Arab community. The sheikhs had to comply with Napoleon's wishes, and so they elected Sheikh Al Arishi as chief judge.

It is interesting now to note that the practice of appointing an Egyptian to the post of Moslem chief judge stopped with the departure of the French in 1801, and was not resumed until our relations with Turkey were served in 1914 during the First Great War.

Besides these political innovations the French introduced a host of other interesting things which puzzled the Egyptians when they first saw them. They were puzzled to read and hear the religious confessions of Bonaparte, in which he publicly

announced his aversion to Christianity and his bias towards Islam, if not his adherence to Mohammedanism.

In his first epistle to which reference has already been made he says: "O Egyptians! They tell you that I have come to your country in order to abolish your religion. This is an absolute lie and I ask you not to believe it. Tell them that I have come to deliver you from your tyrants. Tell them that I worship God Almighty and revere His Prophet and the Holy Koran even better than the Mamelukes. O sheikhs, judges and notables! Tell your nation that the French are sincere Moslems, and in proof thereof they have invaded Rome and driven away the Pope, who never tired of inciting the Christians to fight Islam. They have also driven the Crusading Knights from the Island of Malta, and have always been on friendly terms with the Ottoman Sultan. May God preserve his Empire!"

To give effect to these declarations Bonaparte ordered religious festivals to be celebrated on a scale unknown before. He himself attired like a grand sheikh would participate with the sheikhs in their religious ceremonies amid the cheers of the crowding populace, who began to call him Sultan Al Kebir Bonaparte.

But in truth the people never really believed that Napoleon or his comrades were sincere in their profession of faith. They had soon been undeceived. For they saw the French drink in public, frivol and blaspheme like pagans. They noted with great aversion their libertine ways, not only with European women but also with the Moslem harem, whom they encouraged to appear in public unveiled. They were disgusted to see Christian Copts, Syrians and Jews deviate from their old ways and assume an air not only of equality with the Moslems but even of superiority; whereas of old they were held to be inferior creatures, unworthy even to ride on horseback or put on Kashmir shawls, or even to eat or drink in public during Ramadan, the Moslem month of fasting. All that was now changed, and the Christian minority was beginning to claim equality with the Moslem majority.

They saw that the French had demolished mosques and Moslem cemeteries for the purpose of defending the city. All this rankled in the hearts of the people, and the belief was

general that the French as distinct from other Christians were simply agnostics who cared very little for either Christianity or Islam.

Similarly the Egyptians were puzzled about the relations of Bonaparte with Turkey and the Sultan. For he began by saying that France was an old friend of the Sultan and that the French had come to Egypt to punish the Mamelukes for their disobedience to him. But this tone was soon changed into one of open hostility when Turkey joined England and Russia against France, soon after the entry of the French into Egypt. The Egyptians, who at heart hated both Mamelukes and Turks as much as they did the French if not more, soon began to nourish a feeling of sympathy towards their brethren in Islam, and when the opportune moment came they made no secret of their sentiments.

But there were other things which puzzled the Egyptians and captivated their interest. They were thrilled by the demonstration of scientific experiments in the laboratories of l'Institut d'Egypte domiciled in one of the Mameluke houses in the centre of the city, by the printing-press, the first of its kind in the country, by the military hospitals, by the cafes, the casino and the theatre; and by the new industries which the French started for producing gunpowder, shipbuilding, woollens, machinery, and a score of other things which the French needed in their new abode.

All this awoke the puzzled attention of the Egyptians and opened their eyes to a new world moved by new ideas and swayed by science, force and organisation. But in spite of the novel attractions that Napoleon placed before them they secretly nourished a strong feeling of resentment against the French. Their attitude even became openly defiant when they heard that Turkey and her friends were coming to their rescue. The news also spread that on August 1, shortly after the French victory at Embaba, Nelson had pounced on the French fleet exposed at Abu Kir, caught the French napping, and destroyed the fleet that had carried Napoleon to Malta and Egypt. The French were thus left without any means of communication with their mother country. It looked as if they were trapped in Egypt as prisoners.

When it was known that the Sultan had sided with England

against the French, and that Turkey was preparing two armies, one to come by land and the other by sea to drive away the French, the Egyptians were ready for revolt. The financial exactions of the French, their strictness in collecting dues and taxes, their confiscation of Mameluke property, and their severity towards some of the nobility suspected of corresponding with the Mamelukes—all this made the Egyptians respond to the call to revolt of the secret emissaries of the Turks and Mamelukes. The mere sight of the French infidels ruling the land patronised by the House of the Prophet shocked the religious sentiments of the people and aroused their corporate Moslem feelings to the pitch of a *jehad*, or Moslem crusade.

Twice during the sojourn of the French, which lasted three years and three months, Egypt revolted against the French. The first revolt took place on 11 October 1798, three months after the entry of the French, and Al Jabarti, the Egyptian chronicler of the period, gives us an interesting description of what took place: "There were whisperings and the crowds rallied together without a leader to guide them. Early on Sunday morning they came out determined to fight the infidel and were all armed with a variety of weapons which they had kept carefully hidden. Gangs formed from the rabble of the city, with Al Sayed Badr and his associates, the "insects" of Al Husseiniya quarter, at their head, rushed forward screaming and shouting all along the route to Beit El Kadi the palace of justice, with a thousand or more following them. They tore away parapets and the doorsteps of shops and houses to barricade the streets and prevent the enemy from penetrating into their quarters. Bands of young men stood guard in front of the barricades."

The French were taken by surprise and their losses were heavy. The first victim was General Dupuy, the military governor of the city, who was hit on the head by a missile hurled at him from a window while he was riding past. Two savants who were doing research work in the Mokattam hills were also isolated and killed. Several French officers met their fate on that day.

Thereupon Bonaparte, realising the seriousness of the situation, ordered the Mosque of Al Azhar, the stronghold of the rebels, to be shelled from the neighbouring Mokattam hills.

"When the people saw the shells fall," says Al Jabarti, "a thing they had never known, seen or experienced before, they called on God to protect and shield them from fear." In spite of this terrifying episode, the rebels continued to shoot arrows and hurl missiles until their ammunition was exhausted. Then the sheikhs rode on their mules to see Bonaparte, who reprimanded them severely for having assisted the rebels and connived at their misdeeds, although they shared with him the responsibility of government.

In the end he accepted their intercession, but this did not prevent him from carrying out stern reprisals. The French cavalry were admitted into the sacred precincts of Al Azhar and were kept there until all was quiet. His former friendship with the sheikhs cooled down, and the first national divan was suppressed. When it was restored, Napoleon took care to see that it was composed of other elements besides the sheikhs.

The new divan was composed of sixty members, of whom fourteen were to constitute the permanent council. Apart from the sheikhs there were merchants, officers, Copts, Syrians, Greeks and other Europeans. Of the fourteen members, five were sheikhs, two Moslem merchants, two Copts, two Syrians, and three local European merchants.

It was at that time also that orders were given to pull down the heavy gates that guarded lanes and alleys by night and blocked the way of the French army during the revolt.

The second revolt broke out in the spring of 1800, during the rule of General Kleber, who succeeded Bonaparte after his secret return to France in August 1799.

During the second revolt the Turks were actually at the gates of Cairo, and were ready to occupy the land in consequence of the Treaty of Al Arish, concluded between Sydney Smith, the English admiral, and Kleber, the intrepid French general who hated to stay in Egypt with the French Expedition. Unfortunately the English admiral, in negotiating with the French, was acting without consulting his superiors and, in consequence, the treaty was not ratified by either England or Turkey. War therefore broke out again after the Turks had penetrated very far into the Delta. Their presence among the rebels gave the second revolt a most determined character. The populace of the city, led this time by their chosen leaders

from amongst the sheikhs, artisans and shopkeepers, barricaded the streets, dug trenches, blockaded the quarter inhabited by the Europeans, kept guard at strategic points, and seriously menaced the French who were then busy giving battle to the Turks at Ain Shams, near Heliopolis. The Copts in this emergency joined hands with the Moslems and formed a united front in the face of foreign peril. Al Jabarti, again, relates how Egyptians vied with one another in selling their valuables in order to buy arms and ammunition; how wealthy Egyptians, Moslems and Copts, during this revolt, visited the trenches by night and distributed food and sweets among the national guards, who, together with six thousand Turks who had filtered into the city from the Turkish forces, gave the French a thoroughly bad time. The name of Sayed Omar Makram, the chosen leader of the people at that time, deserves a special niche in the temple of modern Egyptian nationality.

After his victory over the Turks at Ain Shams, Kleber ruthlessly crushed the revolt. He burnt the stronghold of the rebels at Bulak and blockaded the city for more than a month, during which the people suffered unheard-of privations. At last the Turks and the Egyptian leaders began to escape from the city, and the people left to themselves bought their submission by paying a very heavy indemnity amounting to 17,000,000 francs. Al Jabarti tells us how people brought out the golden and silver ornaments of their womenfolk to be sold very cheaply in order to pay their share of the indemnity. No wonder therefore that in June 1800, a few weeks after the suppression of the revolt, Kleber was stabbed in the garden of his residence by a Syrian student studying at Al Azhar University. By his death the French lost their ablest general and most gifted administrator.

He was succeeded by Menou, a mediocre general and a convert to Islam with a new name, Abdullah. Under him the French suffered immensely in prestige and in strength, and were finally beaten by a new Anglo-Turkish expedition. The English expedition of 17,000 men under Sir Ralph Abercromby was the first to sail to Egypt in modern times. They copied Bonaparte's plan and landed near Alexandria at Abu Kir in March 1801. They had little difficulty in beating the French at Kanub to the south of Abu Kir. They besieged Menou with

his 10,000 French in Alexandria, and then proceeded along the Rosetta Branch with their allies the Turks southwards to Cairo. There the French preferred to come to terms with the English.

Menou soon followed suit in September 1801, and the French agreed to leave the country with their arms, materials, and results of their researches.

It was during this expedition that the famous Rosetta Stone, discovered a year earlier near Rosetta by a French officer called Bouchard, fell into the hands of the English, who carried it with them to the British Museum. There it lay meaningless with its three inscriptions in hieroglyphic, Demotic and Greek until in 1822 Champollion, also a French archaeologist, succeeded in deciphering its meaning and thus gave birth to the modern study of Egyptology.

It was the pride of the French that, although they failed in Egypt from a military point of view, they actually succeeded in discovering modern Egypt politically, socially and culturally.

Though driven away from Egypt the French never forgot their early connection with the country and Egypt on her side did not forget the French. But England was ever watchful. For the time she made close friends with Egypt's ruler, the Grand Turk, whose morale and general state of health had so deteriorated that he earned for himself the appropriate nickname of the Sick Man of Europe. In this way England was able to keep watch over Egypt. Not only did she act as police constable on the routes that led to Egypt, but she also held the keys to Egypt, and Egypt gradually found herself somehow attached to England.

CHAPTER II

THE ADVENT OF MOHAMMED ALI TO POWER

WHEN the French evacuated the land, and the English had apparently re-established the Sultan's hold on Egypt, the country soon reverted to its ancient discord and anarchy. Both Turks and Mamelukes tried hard to regain their former domination, the former by right of invasion, and the latter by virtue of their vested interests in the country. The Turks were determined this time to rule the land through their proper governors, and not to delegate their power to the Mameluke Beys as they used to do before the French expedition. On the other hand, the Mamelukes, having been instrumental in raising insurrections against the French, considered themselves entitled to rule the land independently of the Turks; and so began that war of annihilation which characterised the dark period which followed the departure of the French. The Turks were divided into several racial factions, the Albanians against the Kurds and the Old Janissaries against both, and all against the poor overtaxed population of the country. Similarly among the Mamelukes the old petty quarrels broke out again between their rival leaders and between themselves and the Sultan's officers. Both Turks and Mamelukes needed money to carry out their internecine wars; and the poor citizens were bled of their last piastre to pay for the maintenance of the Turkish mercenary troops and the Mameluke marauding parties.

As a result of the almost continuous state of war during these years, the economic situation of the country became deplorable and the people suffered the most onerous injustice ever inflicted on a nation. No wonder therefore that they cursed the day which drove the French army away and brought back to power those best-hated masters. They carefully watched the course of events and awaited their chance. Their chance soon came with a highly gifted Albanian officer, who was in charge

of the Albanian contingent left by the Sultan in Egypt to establish Turkish rule against the Mamelukes. This was the great Mohammed Ali.

Mohammed Ali was born in 1769 at Cavalla, a small Macedonian port on the Aegean Sea now under Greece. He used to pride himself on being born in the same year as Napoleon, the genius whose actions and political views so profoundly influenced Mohammed Ali's own career.

Mohammed Ali came of poor parentage, and was brought up as an orphan by the mayor of Cavalla. He was looked after during his early days by an honest French tobacco merchant called Monsieur Leon ; and had not the French invaded Egypt in 1798, Mohammed Ali might have spent the rest of his life as a respectable tobacco merchant at Cavalla. But fortunately for Egypt fate had dictated otherwise. For when Turkey joined England against France, after the French entry into Egypt, and organised an expedition to co-operate with the English in driving the French out of Egypt. Mohammed Ali enlisted as an officer in the Albanian contingent sent by Turkey under Hussein, "captain pasha" of the Turkish fleet. He soon distinguished himself and was promoted to the rank of general. When both the English and the French left the country after the Peace of Amiens in 1802 between England and France, Mohammed Ali was left in the service of the Turkish pasha nominated by Turkey to govern the country.

He saw clearly that both Mamelukes and Turks were fighting for mere licensed robbery and unbridled capricious authority. He saw the strategic and commercial position of Egypt situated at the crossroads of three continents, with the desert and the sea as its frontiers. He saw the fertility of the land, the docility of its people, and the immense scope for reform and power that lay ahead. And so he made up his mind to grasp the chance of his life.

For the furtherance of his plans Mohammed Ali, who was a born diplomat, found no difficulty in inciting one section against the other, encouraging both Turks and Mamelukes to devour one another and thus prepare the way for his own ascendancy. He first sided with the Mamelukes against the Turks but when the Mamelukes were settled in power, he idd not hesitate to surprise their leaders in their homes early

one morning in March 1803, and chase them with their followers out of the city, scattering their forces and confiscating their property. He ostentatiously kept the Turkish governor, Khourshid Pasha, in power ; and then when the people rose against the exactions of the Turkish soldiery, he threw off the mask and openly sided with the people against the Turkish governor.

Then took place that memorable demonstration in May 1805, when the people headed by their leaders, the sheikhs, the notables and the chiefs of various guilds repaired to the High Court of Justice there to lodge a formal complaint against the governor. The Chief Judge, who was a Turk himself listened carefully to the grievances of the people and summoned the Pasha to appear before the court or to send a delegate to answer in his name. When the delegates came, a formal protest was drawn up by the leaders of the people and handed to the delegates, who promised to give an answer next morning. The following day the demonstrations continued, the merchants and artisans closing their shops and joining the crowd on their way to Beit El Kadi (Le Palais de Justice), all clamouring for justice and invoking the Almighty to crush the power of the Osmanlis.[1]

When they learnt at the court that the Pasha sent no answer they went straight to Mohammed Ali's house. There the sheikhs, in the name of the people, deposed the Turkish governor, and when Mohammed Ali asked them whom they would choose in his place they unanimously clamoured for him as governor. Thereupon Sheikh El Sharkawy, the rector of Al Azhar, and Al Sayed Omar Makram, the head of the religious nobility of the country, came forward on behalf of the people and invested him with the insignia of office, the fur, the mantle and the robe, and thus proclaimed him Governor "in virtue of his rectitude and benevolence and in accordance with the terms stipulated by the people."

Mohammed Ali and the sheikhs notified the Turkish pasha of the decision of the people and requested him to acquiesce. But Khourshid Pasha refused to descend from the Citadel, the seat of government at that time, and there awaited orders from

[1] Al Jabarti, *Ajaib El Athar*, vol. iii (Arabic edition), Sunday, 12th Safar, A. H. 1220.

the Sublime Porte. Mohammed Ali and the sheikhs then decided to isolate the Citadel, and for this reason they had to arm the people who kept watch day and night over the adjoining streets.

When one day Khourshid Pasha's agent made his appearance in the city, the following dialogue took place between him and El Sayed Omar Makram, the chosen leader of the people:

The Turkish Delegate: How can you depose the man whom the Sultan has nominated to be your governor? Have you forgotten the divine commandment to obey God Almighty, His Prophets and those in authority over you?

The Egyptian Leader: Those in authority referred to in the Sacred book are the noble sheikhs, the lawgivers and the just Sultan. But this is an unjust man, and it is customary from the earliest times for the people to depose their governors and even kings or Khalifas if they misgovern or persecute the nation.

The Delegate: And by what right, may I ask, do you blockade us in the Citadel and prevent water and food from reaching us? Are you at war with us? Are we infidels to deserve all this at your hands?

The Leader: Yes, we have the authority of the sheikhs and the Chief Judge to fight you because you have opposed the nation and acted contrary to the commandments of God.

The Turkish Delegate: But the Chief Judge is an infidel himself.

The Egyptian Leader: He is your man and a Turk like yourselves; and if your judge is an unbeliever what about the rest of you? But God forbid. The Chief Judge is an honourable man and he is versed in law and will not forsake justice.

In any case, the Pasha declared that he was appointed Governor by an imperial firman from the Sultan and that he would not quit his office by order of the fellaheen of Egypt. When he informed the Chief Judge of his intention to continue in the Citadel until news came from the Sultan, the Chief Judge firmly replied that forty thousand souls had come to the court clamouring for the Pasha's descent from the seat of government, and that if he refused to do so they would fight him. "This rising of the people," wrote the Chief Judge,

"cannot be opposed or defied." He made it clear to him that this would be his final correspondence with him.[1]

That day the fellaheen of Egypt opened a new chapter in the history of their country. Not only did they venture to depose the Governor without referring the matter to the Porte, but they also asserted their full right of self-determination in choosing their own head of state and in investing him with the insignia of office without even waiting for the approval of the Sultan.

Eventually this approval came in July 1805, when the appointment of Mohammed Ali was confirmed and Khourshid's withdrawal was decreed, contrary to the Sultan's real wishes. But the word of the illiterate fellaheen began to have its full weight and, for the first time in the modern history of Egypt, public opinion began to assert itself.

The Porte tried more than once to uproot Mohammed Ali from Egypt and replace him with new governors of the old type. In July 1806 the Sultan sent four warships and a flotilla with about 3,000 men on board under Admiral of the Fleet Saleh Pasha, who was carrying with him a new governor for Egypt, called Musa Pasha, and at imperial decree nominating Mohammed Ali Governor of Salonica. For it was customary then that Turkish governors should not be allowed to stay in their offices for more than a year or two, after which they were either transferred, decapitated or sold out to higher bidders. The Turks were resolved this time to avenge the appointment of Mohammed Ali by public acclamation against the real interests of the Sultan.

They were counting especially on the Mamelukes whom the Sultan had pardoned, and who were fighting Mohammed Ali in Upper Egypt. The English Government had intervened in their favour before the Porte, and it was agreed that Mohammed Bey El Alfi, leader of the Mamelukes, should pay an annual tribute to Constantinople amounting to 180,000 purses (with £5 Turkish in each) in return for their reinstatement to power in Cairo. The new pasha who would replace Mohammed Ali was to reside in the Citadel and leave the Mamelukes to govern the country as of old.

This shows how the Turks failed to realise the strength of

[1] Al Jabarti, *Ajaib El Athar*, vol. iii (Arabic edition), Safar, A. H. 1220.

the nascent national movement behind Mohammed Ali, whereas Mohammed Ali learned to manipulate this strength in his favour. At first he posed as the obedient servant of the Sultan and declared his readiness to carry out the imperial order as soon as he had paid the arrears of the Sultan's soldiers under him. At the same time he got in touch with the national leaders and left them to work out his deliverance.

The Mamelukes welcomed the opportunity of joining hands with the Turks and Alfi Bey moved northwards near Damanhur in Behera to greet the Turkish emissaries. There they tried in vain to unite their efforts and avail themselves of this unique opportunity to regain power. But their own internal division and the military preparedness of Mohammed Ali contributed to their failure in the end. For after their initial success against Mohammed Ali's force at Negila in Behera, they failed to occupy Damanhur, whither Mohammed Ali had sent munitions and arms.

Meanwhile the national leaders prepared a manifesto in writing against the Mamelukes and the transfer of Mohammed Ali. They stated that the Mamelukes, if they regained power, would not carry out their pledge to pay an annual tribute to the Sultan or send an annual quota of corn and money to the holy places in Arabia. The sheikhs, the ulemas and notables would not endorse any promise given by the Mamelukes, whom they accused of plundering the land. The manifesto was sealed and signed by the leaders and sent to the Captain Pasha and the Sultan. The Captain Pasha paid no attention to the protest and once more informed the sheikhs and leaders to carry out the Imperial orders and leave Mohammed Ali and his followers to quit the country via Damietta. And for the second time the sheikhs answered that they would not accept any other governor in place of Mohammed Ali.

Having assured himself of the sheikhs and the soldiers, Mohammed Ali decided to resist the Sultan by force in case of need and he started to repair the old forts, to arm the people, and to improve his relations with the Mameluke leaders opposed to Alfi Bey, who had visited England and communicated with the English without the consent of his partners. This course of action, together with Mohammed Ali's presents to the Captain Pasha, made the latter decide in favour of

Mohammed Ali who agreed to pay 4,000 purses annually in the Porte. In October 1806 Saleh Pasha the Captain sailed from Abu Kir back to Constantinople, taking on board with him Musa Pasha, the would-have-been governor of Egypt, and Ibrahim, Mohammed Ali's eldest son, who was taken to Constantinople as a hostage until the full payment of the tribute. In November 1806 Mohammed Ali was confirmed in his office. His confirmation was soon made secure by the sudden death of the two prominent Mameluke leaders, Al Bardisi in November of the same year, and Al Alfi in January the following year.

But no sooner was this episode concluded than a fresh national crisis loomed on the horizen, a crisis which was to try to the full the energies and the patriotism of the new governor. The English were sending to Egypt a naval expedition with nearly seven thousand men under General Frazer in answer to the entreaties of Alfi Bey, who had promised England the mastery of the coasts of Egypt in return for their help in reinstating the Mamelukes to power under the suzerainty of the Sultan. It was as a result of this arrangement with England that the Sultan had sent the Captain Pasha with a full pardon granted to the Mamelukes and a decree nominating Mohammed Ali to the pashalik of Salonica. Now that the scheme had failed, it remained for England to take the matter in hand. England had recently sent an ultimatum to Turkey to secede from Napoleon and join her and Russia. Influenced by Napoleon's able ambassador Sebastiani the Sultan rejected the English ultimatum and, in consequence, an English fleet under Admiral Duckworth penetrated the Dardanelles in February 1807. Faced with the catastrophe of losing Constantinople to the English, the Sultan and the French spared no effort in fortifying the coasts. When Duckworth was ready for action he found himself and his fleet so dangerously menaced by the Turks that he had to retreat from the Dardanelles, much to the discomfiture of England.

It was to make up for this failure in the Dardanelles that General Frazer's expedition sailed in March of the same year to invade Egypt. England had the example of the French expedition fresh in her mind and she tried to follow suit. This time the English really wanted to conquer the land, and

were not to be contented with driving their enemy out of the country as they did in the first expedition in 1801.

They knew that Napoleon had had with him no less than 32,000 men and that with only 7,000 men they could not aspire to conquer the land unless help was forthcoming. They were counting on the active co-operation of the Anglophile Mamelukes under Alfi Bey, who had visited England after the French withdrawal from Egypt and got entangled in a sort of agreement with them. Unfortunately for England and happily for Egypt. Alfi Bey died two months before the landing of their expedition, which thus was doomed to failure from the outset.

Al Jabarti, the sole Egyptian chronicler of the period, relates how Mohammed Ali, who was fighting the Mamelukes in Upper Egypt, was much perturbed at the news of the British expedition, and how people who had seen the British beat the French in Egypt expected an easy victory for them. The first news justified these fears, for the British who landed at Abu Kir found no difficuly in occupying Alexandria without the least resistance. It transpired later that the English had negotiated with Amin Agha, the Turkish governor of the city, and with the head notable of the city, for the peaceful surrender of the place in return for a persuasive sum of money.

This treasonable agreement perpetrated by the men responsible for Alexandria was never sanctioned by the sheikhs, the notables or Mohammed Ali's men in Cairo. It must be borne in mind that Alexandria and other ports of Egypt were under the control of the Captain Pasha of Turkey, and this fact explains the ease with which the British negotiated the surrender of the city.

The news of the fall of Alexandria spread like fire, and all sections of society were once more alive to the danger of witnessing another infidel invasion of the land. Even the Mamelukes, on whom the English were relying for the success of their invasion, were conscious of the shame they were about to earn for themselves if the English carried out their plans. Mohammed Ali lingered in Upper Egypt with a view to fleeing, in case of need, from the country eastwards to Palestine and Syria.

When the English occupied Alexandria, a detachment was sent to occupy Rosetta, and letters were sent to the leaders of the Mamelukes inviting them to co-operate with them: "They say you have lost El Alfi; but Alfi was one and you are a host of hundreds; so come to us if you want the accomplishment of your plans and do not be late. For this is your last chance and you will regret having missed it."[1]

These letters found the Mamelukes divided as usual. The anti-Alfists were under no obligation towards the English, for they had not been consulted by Alfi Bey; the Alfists were now beaten by Mohammed Ali and did not dare to oppose the nation by siding with the English.

Mohammed Ali, in the face of this national danger, showed a most reconciliatory spirit and sent to Cairo for a deputation of sheikhs to come and conclude peace between him and the Mameluke leaders. He was ready to concede anything—even the whole of Upper Egypt—provided they agreed to join the national front against the English invasion.

The ulemas easily convinced the Mameluke Beys by arguing that the English would be worse masters than the French. "The French have no religion," they said, "they believe in the principles of liberty and fraternity; whereas the English are devout Chris'tians who hate other religions. It is not right that you should side with the infidels against the Moslems."

One of the Mameluke leaders declared that, as a Moslem who had fought against the French and emigrated from Egypt for the cause of the Lord he would not now end his life by resorting to the foreigner and fighting with them against the faithful. Thus the ulema triumphed, and the deputation of the sheikhs came back to Cairo with a sealed document from the Mamelukes to the Chief Kadi announcing their decision not to co-operate with the English.

Soon the news reached Cairo that the English had been routed at Rosetta. It transpired that a detachment of 2,000 English soldiers was sent to occupy Rosetta and make it a basis of operations. The governor of the city, an able officer called Ali Bey, determined to oppose the English. The garrison of the place did not exceed a few hundred soldiers, but he found the populace most eager to help. When the English

[1] Al Jabarti, *Ajaib El Athar*, vol. iv, (Arabic edition), Moharrem, A.H. 1222.

appeared he gave orders that everybody should keep to their appointed place and be ready to act after hearing the signal. The English entered the city towards the end of March 1807. They thought that Rosetta, like Alexandria, would submit without a gunshot, and they sauntered round the city as if they were on a promenade. But just when the sun was at its hottest and the English were reclining against the walls to protect themselves from the heat of the sun, the signal was heard and the Egyptian people began to fire their arms from the windows, the tops of houses, and from every corner of the city. The English were absolutely taken by surprise. They lost their commanding officer, General Wauchope, and several hundred others. The rest retreated to Alexandria to tell the story of their defeat to the High Command. Some of the prisoners and heads of the killed carried on poles were sent by Ali Bey, the governor of Rosetta, to Cairo to tell the news of their victory to the anxious people.

The news of the English defeat electrified the imagination of all the people. It restored strength and confidence to the heart of Mohammed Ali, his agents and the people; it finally alienated the Mamelukes from the English and prepared the way for a national effort to beat the invaders. Drovetti, the French consul at Alexandria who had fled to Cairo to avoid falling into the hands of the English, joined with Mohammed Ali, who had recently come to Cairo from Upper Egypt to supervise the raising of defence works against the English. Al Sayed Omar Makram, the famous national hero, came forward once again, and thanks to his instructions, guidance and example, the people armed themselves and the students of Al Azhar deserted their lectures and volunteered with the populace to march to Alexandria or Rosetta to fight the enemy, who had planned to avenge their defeat at Rosetta.

General Stewart was sent with 4,000 men and the necessary munitions and material to Rosetta, and there he took his stand at Al Hammad, to the south of Rosetta. From Al Hammad the English began a regular siege of the city. The havoc created in the place by continuous bombardment and the heavy losses suffered made the governor and the head notable send to Cairo several requests for reinforcements. It is significant that in their requests they refused the despatch

of Turkish soldiery, contenting themselves with munitions and guns and volunteers from among the people. It shows the growing confidence in the national element and the immense hatred of the irresponsible Turkish soldiery.

Mohammed Ali was able to send about 4,000 men under Tapouzoglou. When they reached Rosetta in face of the enemy they divided themselves in two sections, each of them occupying one bank of the Nile, and then one of the sections proceeded to attack the enemy's position at Al Hammad. The Egyptians made full use of their cavalry, knowing that the English were deficient in this respect because they had not been able to secure the necessary horses. The cavalry soon drove the enemy from their positions and on 21 April 1807, after three hours' fighting, the English had to raise the siege of Rosetta, leave Al Hammad, and make their way as best as they could to Alexandria.

It was a resounding victory for the Egyptians. One-fourth of the enemy's force had either surrendered as prisoners or been killed in battle. At Alexandria the English had to cut the earth banks of Lake Mariut and surround Alexandria with water just as Menou had done in 1801 when besieged by the English.

The whole country received the news of the victory at Al Hammad with great rejoicings. To proclaim the victory, 480 prisoners were shown round the city. It was now certain that the English could not invade the country with success.

Mohammed Ali, relieved from the fear of conquest by Britain, set himself to winning the hearts of the English by attending to their wounded and affording every comfort to their prisoners.

General Frazer also adopted a new line of policy. After the defeat of Al Hammad, news reached him of the meeting at Tilsit between Napoleon and Alexander the Czar of Russia. It was clear that England now needed all her forces to defend her interest in Europe. He therefore sent an envoy to Mohammed Ali to negotiate for peace. It was a pleasant surprise for Mohammed Ali and his agents, who had expected a long fight with the English. Mohammed Ali therefore hastened to Damanhur, there to meet the English envoy and to sign the treaty of peace by which the English were to with-

draw from the country and Egypt was to release the English prisoners of war. The English expedition finally vacated Alexandria in September 1807, leaving the place in the hands of Mohammed Ali's agent Tapouzoglou, the hero of Al Hammad.

Henceforward Alexandria, which had been in the domain of the Turkish Captain Pasha, came within the jurisdiction of the Governor of Egypt. And, thanks to Mohammed Ali, Alexandria soon recovered from her stagnant state and became the second port in the Mediterranean after Marseilles, and the favourite seat of the Governor of Egypt in summer.

The Turkish Sultan showed his appreciation of the great effort made by Mohammed Ali and the Egyptian people by acquiescing in the Egyptian possession of Alexandria, and by returning Ibrahim, Mohammed Ali's son, to Cairo. Ibrahim came back laden with valuable presents and honours conferred on his father, his assistants, and on Al Sayed Omar Makram, the leader of the people.

This victory over the English made Mohammed Ali the undisputed champion of Egyptian nationality, and his fame began to traverse the boundaries of Egypt to the outside world.

Assured of his unassailable position and popularity, Mohammed Ali decided to adopt Egypt as his mother country, and to send for his family, his relatives and friends to help him in the government of the country. Nothing could equal the loyalty and the extreme devotion with which Mohammed Ali was served by his sons and other members of his family. They were all attached by the most affectionate ties to the viceroy, or Effendina (our Lord) as Mohammed Ali and his successors were henceforward called by the Egyptian people. And contrary to what was customary in Eastern courts, they all afforded him active co-operation and exemplary loyalty.

Thus was Mohammed Ali able to embark on his enlightened dictatorial career of reform and progress, destined to raise Egypt from her medieval status of an ordinary Ottoman province to the level of a vigorous modern state, conscious of her full rights of nationhood and ranking high among civilized states.

CHAPTER III

UNIFORMS AND REFORMS

THE paramount duty of an enlightened government in Egypt is to rescue its cultivable lands from the ever encroaching desert by thorough cultivation and skilful irrigation. Sand and water—two elements, the one meaning death and the other life—have always been in constant struggle in the valley of the Nile. And whenever a feeble government ruled in Egypt the desert never failed to take advantage of its opponent, causing those ravaging famines and plagues of classic memory. Never was the land of Egypt less productive, less prosperous or less populous than during the period just preceding and immediately following the French expedition.

When Mohammed Ali became supreme in Egypt he gave the land his unremitting attention. In order to regulate the imposition and collection of land taxes, he began in 1813 by ordering a correct survey of all cultivable tracts, taking care to diminish the local unit of length, the kassaba, in order to increase the total number of taxable feddans or acres of land. The result when the cadastral survey was completed brought the cultivable area to about 3,000,000 feddans.[1]

Then he made up his mind to expropriate the Mamelukes and Turks who, under the name of Multazims, used to farm out the taxes of certain districts paying as little to the State funds and despoiling the fellah of as much as they could. To carry out his plan he asked the Multazims to estimate their net incomes from the lands of their iltizam; and they, suspecting some device for further taxation, countered by putting their incomes at their lowest. He at once pounced on these statements and issued an order pensioning all Multazims and taking over their lands for himself. The Multazims

[1] One feddan equals 4,200 square metres. The feddan is divided into 333⅓ kassabas.

had to be satisfied with an annual pension for life equal to the income they had estimated for themselves.

Apart from the iltizam or taxable lands, there were the private farms, or wissieh lands, for the personal use of the Multazims. These wissieh lands were left in the hands of their masters if they had been loyal; if not, as was the case with the Multazims of Upper Egypt who rose against Mohammed Ali, the wissieh lands were also appropriated.

Another category of lands was that held in mortmain, or the wakf land endowed by its proprietors for pious deeds. Such lands could not be alienated by sale or purchase, and formed a good part of the total area ; for people found in the system of wakf a guarantee against confiscation by the Government or dispersion by posterity. These lands were generally administered by sheikhs and ulemas under the title of Nazirs. Mohammed Ali decided to relieve the Nazirs of their duties and to take over the administration of the wakf lands. He also undertook to discharge all the pious deeds stipulated by the waqf donors.

Thus Mohammed Ali became the tenant-in-chief of practically all the cultivable land in the country, a position which brought him into direct contract with the fellaheen. Taking advantage of this position, he started what was in fact both an agrarian and a social revolution. Each fellah was given a portion of land from three to five feddans in extent to live on and benefit by its usufruct, the Sultan (in theory) being the sole owner of the land. Each was supplied with the required implements, animals and seeds for sowing the land. The governors of the provinces and districts were to determine the area and the crop to be cultivated in a given zone. It was also the duty of the officers of the government to evaluate all the harvests at the Government's price with a view to determining the land tax, and leaving the balance, usually about one-sixth of the produce, for the personal use of the fellah. The harvests were then removed to Government warehouses, where they were stored until the opportune moment came for disposing of the produce in local or foreign markets. Although the fellaheen had no right to sell, mortgage, inherit or bequeath their land property, this step taken by Mohammed Ali was the prelude to the right of private owner-

ship of land granted during the reign of Said, Mohammed Ali's son.

After making himself almost the only Multazim of the lands of Egypt, Mohammed Ali turned to its cultivation. He introduced or encouraged the cultivation of some of the most suitable and profitable crops like indigo, sugarcane, rice, cotton and flax. These were summer crops, and so it was necessary to dig canals and wells to secure enough water for them. And as these crops were much needed in the European markets. Mohammed Ali started a system of monopolies which, though at first confined to the crops mentioned, gradually embraced practically all the produce of the land. Althongh this system entailed much hardship on the people, it was solely by this method that Mohammed Ali was able to collect enough money for carrying out his military plans, and it was also by this method that it was possible to reform agriculture. Left to themselves the fellaheen would have neglected the land as before because of their ignorance and lack of interest. In a conversation with Dr. Bowring, a Member of Parliament sent to Egypt in 1838 by Lord Palmerston, the Foreign Secretary, to report on the progress of the country, Mohammed Ali said "No! my peasantry are suffering from the disease of ignorance to their true interests, and I must act the part of the doctor. I must be severe when anything goes wrong."[1]

The result of this benevolent severity soon became apparent in the thousands of acres made cultivable by Mohammed Ali, and in the network of canals dug all over the Delta to bring the water from the branches of the Nile to the land during the drought of the long spring and summer months. Not less than a million feddans were reclaimed from the desert, and in 1833 the revenue of the country amounted to about £E.2,500,000—nearly a million pounds more than it was in 1818.

Having settled the question of the land and its crops, Mohammed Ali turned his attention to consolidating his power by organising the arms of the State. The fame of the battle of Abu Kir, in which Nelson had destroyed Napoleon's

[1] Bowring's Report. Parliamentary Papers, vol. xxi, 1840.

means of communication with France, taught Mohammed Ali what a mighty weapon Naval superiority could be in beating an enemy. And on the battlefield near Rahmanieh on the Rosetta Branch, where Mohammed Ali had fought side by side with the English expedition against the French in 1801, he shrewdly observed what a modern fighting army could do in comparison with the Turkish militia which he offered. At the time of General Frazer's expedition in 1807, we saw how Mohammed Ali, assisted by Drovetti, the French consul, erected defences and began to adopt less barbarous methods in dealing with the wounded and the British prisoners. His mind was evidently already set on organising his forces on modern lines, and he was simply waiting for an opportune moment. It came in 1809 when the Sultan, having repeatedly failed to recover the greater part of Arabia (including the two sacred cities of Mecca and Medina) from the power of the Moslem puritan order of the Wahhabis under Ibn Saoud, charged Mohammed Ali with the task of subduing Arabia. To accomplish this Mohammed Ali saw the necessity of creating the nucleous of an army and a navy.

But first of all, so that things would work smoothly, Mohammed Ali decided that the troublesome and treacherous Mamelukes should be destroyed as a party. By this time the Mameluke Beys under Shahin Bey had ceased to obstruct the government of Mohammed Ali; they had reconciled themselves to their fate, and were living at their ease in Cairo or across the Nile at Giza and Fayoum on benefices reserved from Mohammed Ali. But Mohammed Ali feared that they might again take up arms against him if they knew that his forces were leaving the country to fight in a far-off and difficult country like Arabia.

He did not forget that the Porte had planned the destruction of the Mamelukes immediately after the departure of the French, and instructed both the Captain Pasha at Alexandria and the Grand Vizier in Cairo to enveigle the Mamelukes into paying a visit and then to kill them. The Captain Pasha at Alexandria actually succeeded in killing several of the Mameluke chiefs. But at Cairo the plot did not materialise, thanks to the timely intervention of the British who were still in the country.

So Mohammed Ali decided that the occasion of investing his son Toussount with the command of the expedition to Arabia should be the signal for getting rid of the Mamelukes. One Friday afternoon in March 1811 the Mameluke Beys heavily clad in their best attire and supported on their magnificently caparisoned horses, came early to the Citadel to attend the grand ceremony to which all the dignitaries and the officers of the state were invited. They offered their congratulations to the Pasha and apologised for the absence of the few beys who could not come. Mohammed Ali received them graciously, and at the appointed time the trumpets sounded and the procession proceeded on its way. The route from Citadel Square (then called the Remeila) to the palace of Mohammed Ali was lined with his Albanian soldiers. At the head of the procession came the Kurds and the Janissaries followed by an Albanian contingent, and then the Mameluke Beys on horseback followed by another Albanian contingent.

It was observed that the Albanian soldiers lining the mountain path from the palace to the gate of the Citadel leading to the Remeila Square were occupying all points of vantage along the route, but this did not arouse the suspicion of the Mamelukes. It was not till after the sign was given for the locking of the heavy gate of El Azab that the Mamelukes began to suspect a trap. Soon the Albanian soldiers opened fire from all directions on the Mamelukes, who were squezed between the Albanian contingents and the steep banks on either side of the road. The swords which they had unsheathed were of no use against the guns of the soldiers. They were all killed, even those who found their way to the harem sanctuary and cried for mercy; and those who managed to climb the ramparts of the Citadel were all overtaken by the soldiers and shot down—all except Emin Bey who, as Al Jabarti the chronicler of the period, asserts, came late to the ceremony and was therefore able to escape the jumble near the gate. He climbed the rampart on horseback and leapt down to the road outside the Citadel, taking care to jump clear of his horse before reaching the ground. He then managed to escape eastwards into the desert to Syria.

After waiting in vain for the appearance of the military

pageant, the crowds lining the streets began to be restless; and when they heard the firing in the Citadel, they were ready to hear the worst. Soon the news spread like wildfire that Shahin Bey, the Mameluke chief, and his comrades were killed. The city fell into a panic, shops were closed and the populace ran to take shelter.

The soldiers made their way to the Mameluke houses which they pillaged, and the Mamelukes and citizens wearing Mameluke costumes were chased and murdered wherever met. In the provinces the governors and mudirs had received instructions to kill, and similar assaults were made. This carnage went on for two or three days. On the day following the mossacre, Mohammed Ali; accompanied by his son Toussoun, descended from the Citadel surrounded by a brilliant retinue. He rode along the streets, shooting pillagers whenever he caught them red-handed. Soon order reigned in the city.

"The massacre of the Mamelukes," in the words of Sir Charles Murray, the British Consul-General, "was an atrocious crime, but it was a necessary prelude to all subsequent reforms."

"For every drop of blood," said Dr. Bowring, "that Mohammed Ali spilt that day, he saved more than one innocent person."

Not less than a thousand perished all over the country during the famous massacre, after which the whole order of Mamelukes ceased to exist. The remnants who lingered in Upper Egypt with Ibrahim Bey, or who managed to eseape from Cairo, left the country and found shelter in Nubia, south of Assuan, where they established themselves until Mohammed Ali's expedition to the Sudan in 1820 put an end to them. Their property was confiscated, and their womenfolk and children were henceforth left in the charge of Mohammed Ali. The womenfolk were married to Mohammed Ali's officers and followers, and the children formed the nucleus of his new military and naval organisations. Thus the lives of both women and children were spared yet to instil vigour and beauty into the veins of the future generations of Egypt.

Having thus summarily settled troubles at home, Moham-

med Ali now devoted himself whole-heartedly to the prosecution of his expedition to Arabia. His favourite son Toussoun, who was at the head of the expedition, was able to beat the Wahhabis and subdue Medina and Mecca to his rule. When Saoud, the Wahhabi chief, made a last effort to restore the prestige of his sect, Toussoun asked for reinforcements and Mohammed Ali himself came to Arabia in 1813 at the head of a strong force. The name of Mohammed Ali was enough to strike terror into the hearts of the Arabs, who were later put at a great disadvantage when their chief Saoud died in 1814 and was succeeded by a much less able chief called Abdullah.

In 1815 Mohammed Ali, on hearing of Napoleon's escape from Elba and of a treasonable rising under one of his officers in Cairo, hurried back to Egypt. He was followed a year later by Toussoun, who left Arabia with Deriya the capital of the Wahhabis still in their hands, and without concluding any peace with them. Toussoun was received in Egypt as the saviour of the sacred cities, and the rejoicings of the people continued for several days. Unfortunately the young prince died suddenly in 1816 while living in his palace near Rosetta.

Toussoun was a talented general, beloved by the soldiers and the people. His father saw in him a picture of himself, and confided in him more than in any of his brothers, including Ibrahim, the eldest brother, who now succeeded Toussoun in Arabia.

Ibrahim proved himself an even more formidable soldier than his brother. Deriya fell after a siege of six months and was razed to the ground in 1818. Abdullah ibn Saoud, the Wahhabi chief, was taken prisoner, and was sent to Cairo and thence to Istanbul, where he was beheaded. Ibrahim, the victor of Arabia, came back to Cairo in 1819 amid national feastings that continued for a week, and was rewarded by the Sultan with the title of Wazier, or Minister, and the governorship of Arabia.

The campaign in Arabia had lasted for more than eight years, and entailed hardships which Mohammed Ali and the country bore with admirable fortitude and perseverance. Time after time news came of defeats and setbacks, but reinforcements and money continued to pour into Arabia until

the final victory of Deriya, crowned the efforts of the Pasha, who had made up his mind to establish his power in Arabia and to enhance the name of Egypt in the Moslem world.

The submission of Arabia was an incentive for Mohammed Ali to conquer the Sudan, and thus transform the Red Sea into an Egyptian lake. Mohammed Ali was attracted to the Sudan by his desire to destroy the remnants of the Mamelukes who had established themselves in Dongola, and to distract his insurgent Albanian soldiers who were trying to foment trouble in Egypt on hearing of his plans for creating a regular modern army. The lure of gold and other minerals said to be prevalent in the Sudan at the time also attracted him. Speculation about the sources of the Nile, a problem which was still puzzliug the minds of all explorers, also influenced his decision. Mohammed Ali, following the example of Napoleon, sent ulemas and scientists to accompany his third son, Ismail, whom he nominated head of the expedition to the Sudan in June 1820. The expedition was composed of 3,000 infantry, 2,500 cavalry and twelve guns. The ulemas who accompanied the expedition had the job of convincing sceptics that it was not wrong to war against Sunni Moslem tribes, which were neither Shiites nor Wahhabites. In 1819 the expedition moved up the Nile and along its banks. It found no difficulty in dispersing the Mamelukes at Dongola, and in defeating the warlike tribe of Shaikia between Dongola and Berber at the battle of Korti.

Then Ismail established himself at Sennar, and began his excavations for minerals to the east of the Blue Nile. Meanwhile another expedition under Mohammed Defterdar Bey was sent by Mohammed Ali to conquer Kordofan, and a third one under Ibrahim, the hero of Arabia, was sent in 1821 to help his brother Ismail, who complained of the miserable state of his men due to the inclement weather of the Sudan and the ravages of different diseases. Ibrahim's commission was to sail along the White Nile as far south as he could. Ibrahim moved southwards up to the confluence of the Sobat with the Nile, and then fell ill and went back to Egypt.

After having subdued the whole territory along the White Nile up to longitude 5° N., Ismail was less fortunate than

his brother; for although he had asked to go back, he did not live to receive his father's answer. He was burnt alive while feasting with his staff as the guest of Nimr, the master of Shendi.

Nimr had been severely reprimanded by Ismail for having incited his tribe to rise against the Egyptians, and he affected to submit and accept the heavy fine exacted from him. But he planned a terrible revenge. He asked Ismail and his staff to feast with him in his palace of mud and straw, and surrounded the whole place with fodder and branches of trees ostensibly for the horses, but really for lighting a fire that would devour everything. When the feast was over Ismail and his men found themselves surrounded by hills of fodder and wood all ablaze, and outside the ring of fire Nimr's men were ready with their bows and arrows to shoot those who tried to escape their fate.

Ismail and his men perished, but El Defterdar, the conqueror of Kordofan (who was Ismail's brother-in-law), vowed to have revenge, and two thousand men from the tribe were killed, not, however, including Nimr, who had fled after his fiendish banquet. Thus was Mohammed Ali bereft of his two younger sons. Toussoun and Ismail, in the pursuit of his policy of aggrandisement.

The loss of Ismail was received with great consternation in Cairo, but Mohammed Ali did not abate his interest in the Sudan. He left Defterdar Bey to continue the subjugation of the Sudan, ordered a new capital to be built which was named Khartoum, and asked for a Sudanese contingent to be sent to Egypt to be conscripted for his new army.

The story of the creation of a new modern army in Egypt is one that would add more lustre to the name of Mohammed Ali than anything else. After Ibrahim's victorious return from Arabia, Mohammed Ali decided to launch out on his new reforms regardless of the opposition of his Albanians.

It was at this time that Napoleon's regime in Europe collapsed, and a large number of French officers who loathed the government of Louis XVIII left France and offered their services to governments in far-off countries. Egypt to the French was still a name to conjure with, and to Egypt

several Frenchmen went at this period to help Mohammed Ali with his great renaissance movement. One of these Frenchmen, an officer called Colonel Seves, who had been aide-de-camp to Marechal Ney, was recommended to Mohammed Ali by a friend, and Mohammed Ali, who was a keen judge of men, found in Colonel Seves the right man to be entrusted with the important task of creating his new army. His son Ibrahim was to share in the process, not as a collaborator but as a mere cadet.

The experiment was first started in Cairo with a group of Mameluke youths; but on second thoughts Mohammed Ali saw fit to transfer the scene of the experiment to Assuan. There an officers' training corps was begun in 1819 by Colonel Seves with a thousand youths of Mameluke origin. The Colonel gave himself up heart and soul to his task, and for three years he worked hard to inculcate the modern military qualities of discipline, obedience and loyalty in the hearts of the Mameluke youths who were by nature and tradition quarrelsome, perfidious and undependable.

It was with difficulty that Seves managed to win their respect and devotion. One day, while out in the desert practising, one of the cadets shot at Seves. The bullet missed him and whizzed past his ear. He was enraged and belaboured with his whip the whole company, accusing them of stupidity, negligence and bad marksmanship. Then he threw away his whip, stood erect in front of the company and in a serene, decided voice ordered them to load their muskets and fire at him if they would. The youths felt ashamed of themselves, threw down their weapons and ran to his feet crying for pardon. This and other similar incidents were exploited by Colonel Seves to habituate the turbulent elements under his charge to acts of loyalty, honour and self-denial, with the result that in time the youths gradually became attached to their master, and when Colonel Seves became converted to Islam with Suleiman Bey and later Suleiman Pasha as his name they became very devoted to him.

In three years' time Suleiman Bey turned out the first batch of modern Egyptian officers, fit to take charge of the Egyptian armies that would soon win renown and victory in the battlefields of Europe and Asia.

Having accomplished the task of creating officers, Mohammed Ali began to think of levying a regular army. It was certainly not going to be of the type of the old Turkish militia composed of insubordinate Kurds, Janissaries or Albanians, most of whom were mercenaries hated by the people and by Mohammed Ali himself. Nor did he intend to renew the Mameluke practice of buying slaves from Georgia and thus pave the way for his own downfall. Mohammed Ali hit on a new idea that would repay him for the expenses he had incurred by his expeditions to Arabia and the Sudan. He decided to import about 30,000 Nubians and Sudanese to form the nucleus of his new army. Camps to train them were started at Beni Addi near Assiut and at Farshut near Kena. When they finished their training they were sent to the battlefields of Arabia and the Morea in Greece.

But it was soon found out that the weak limbs of the Nubian, his excitable nature and his susceptibility to cold when fighting in cold regions, made him a victim of ravaging diseases. Then the highly creative mind of Mohammed Ali originated an extensive plan: to conscript the fellaheen and the townspeople into the army by ballot. This was in truth a capital idea. The healthy, sturdy and enduring fellaheen, who for centuries had been tied down to the land and cheated of their liberties by foreign aggressors, were at last to be resurrected from oblivion and to be taught for the first time since Saladin the fundamental lessons of citizenship and nationalism.

Mohammed Ali was told that his plan, if carried out, would expose agriculture to ruin by creating scarcity of labourers on the land. They told him that the fellah would prove to be a bad soldier, perhaps a worse soldier than the Sudanese, owing to his serfdom on the land for centuries past. But Mohammed Ali was adamant in his resolution, and the success that awaited him more than justified this national reform, which opened a new and honourable career for all the national elements, both Moslems and Copts, and enabled them to join in the defence of their country and the glorification of its arms. The creation of the regular army was a sort of sublimation of the insurrectionary spirit manifested by the crowds who rose against the French in Cairo and in the provinces

all over Egypt. The Turks who later saw the Egyptians fight with them in the Morea and beat them in Asia Minor in the battle of Konieh in 1832, and at Nezib in Syria in 1839, dared no longer to stigmatise the Egyptians as mere "fellaheen" fit for nothing but tilling the soil.

No doubt the fellaheen bitterly hated the new order or Nizam—the Jehadia as it was called—which separated them from kith and kin and sent them to fight and perhaps to die on the battlefield abroad. The docile fellah stopped at nothing to escape conscription into the army. If intelligent and well-to-do he usually learnt the Koran by heart, and later on joined Al Azhar, where students were exempted from military service. But the ordinary poor fellaheen or townsmen escaped conscription by other means. They even maimed their limbs, tampered with their fingers and eyes or fled to the desert, to Palestine and Syria to evade conscription. But gradually the people saw for themselves the benefits that would accrue to them by joining the army. They noted the smart uniforms, the regular pay, the rewards that awaited the diligent and brave, and the proud social status which they enjoyed when they came back to their villages. All this made the people modify their attitude towards conscription, but the women-folk continued until very recently to consider conscription into the army as the worst evil that could befall their male children.

Mohammed Ali took a personal interest in the training of his troops. He would visit their camps, share their meals, stay with them, and attend their practices and manoeuvres with the keenest enjoyment. Apart from Suleiman Pasha, he engaged other French and Italian officers. He opened new military schools for the different arms; the Infantry School first established at Damietta and later removed to Cairo; the Cavalry School at Giza; the Gunnery School at Tura near Helwan; the Staff College at Khanka; the Marine School at Alexandria; and a Music School at the Citadel.

In a few years' time Mohammed Ali could boast of a fine regular army that would rival any modern army in Europe. It was composed in 1839 of more than 200,000 soldiers of whom more than 130,000 were regulars.

* * *

But, besides men and officers, the army also needed engineers, doctors, teachers and craftsmen of every description. And in order to have a constant supply of all these, it was necessary to establish schools, hospitals, and workshops and mills of various kinds. But how to create something out of nothing? For there was nothing but Al Azhar University with its reactionary sheikhs and students who only cared for religious subjects. Could he modernise Al Azhar? He could make use of some of its students, but he did not dare to introduce any modifications in the traditional course of learning in the Azhar. He therefore decided to leave Al Azhar and its kindred institutions dormant and find a solution elsewhere. Foreigners, he decided, should be engaged to start all the desired establishments. But to rely on foreigners alone was surely no secure basis for national power and independence; so he decided that foreigners should be allowed only to advise and supervise, and that the nationals of the land should gradually learn to direct their own affairs. Primary, secondary and high schools for every branch of study, all of them run on modern French lines, were opened for the first time in the country side by side with the Al Azhar and other religious institutes. Mohammed Ali's solution was the cause of the present duality of education in Egypt—the religiously biased and the modern.

The people easily confused the new schools of Mohammed Ali with the army conscription offices: the unity of purpose between both, the control of the Ministry of Defence over both, and the presence of foreigners engaged in both were enough to arouse the people against the modern schools; and the recalcitrant Egyptians had to be pressed and conscripted into schools as for the army. They likewise had to be lured by inducements of board, clothing and even pocket money.

Besides schools, camp hospitals and other permanent hospitals were also erected for the first time, and the sanitation of the country was taken in hand, thanks to the superb efforts of another famous Frenchman, Dr. Clot Bey, Military, naval, industrial and educational missions of young Egyptians were sent to the various countries of Europe to specialise in all branches of knowledge and industry.

The first mission sent in 1826 comprised 44 students. The number reached 114 in 1833. And when those young men returned, Mohammed Ali found in them his intellectual helpers ready and competent to fill the high administrative and military posts of the State.

Meanwhile, on the pretext of carrying troops and provisions by sea for his expedition to Arabia, Mohammed Ali had an arsenal constructed at Bulak, adjoining the Nile near Cairo. Here, day and night, ships of all kinds were built under European supervision. The ships were then carried in pieces on camels' backs across the desert to Suez where they were put together and launched.

Mohammed Ali soon found himself master of the Red Sea, an advantage which enabled him to send men and provisions to his son in Arabia and thus secure the complete subjugation of the peninsula. His mastery of the Arabian coasts was soon supplemented by his conquest of the Sudan.

Having made all these conquests, Mohammed Ali turned his attention to commerce. When da Gama sailed to India round the Cape in 1495, the commercial prosperity of Egypt and of the Mediterranean ports came to an end. The stream of gold that once passed through Egypt, and had given birth to the legendary wealth and luxury of the *Arabian Nights* and the early Mamelukes, was dried up for more than three centuries. A revival of the overland route to and from India and the Far East was therefore essential. The Red Sea was cleared of pirates ; the desert had long been redeemed by Mohammed Ali from the pillaging nomads ; regular and quick camel service was established between Suez and Cairo. The Mahmudia canal was dug in 1819 under the supervision of Nur Eddin Pasha, an Egyptian engineer, to connect Alexandria with the Rosetta branch of the Nile, thus enabling big ships to convey goods and passengers from Alexandria to Cairo and vice versa. Customs were to be collected once only, and no local duties or injustices were admitted. Regular post and telegraph services, the first by dromedaries and the latter by signal towers, were established between Cairo and Alexandria and between Cairo and Suez, and thus every facility was provided to revive the lost overland trade through the Isthmus of Suez.

Shortly afterwards the steamboat was invented, and commerce was at once revolutionised. Despatch and security and not the mere cheapness of transport were henceforward to determine the route along which mails and passengers and later commerce were to be conveyed. The East India Company saw the vital importance of the overland route via Suez and gave it its instant concern. In 1829 Lieutenant Thomas Waghorn, whose statue greets the traveller at Port Tewfik, was sent to Egypt to report on the chances of success of an overland route. Waghorn had no difficulty in convincing the "merchant" ruler of Egypt to patronise the scheme. In 1837 a regular steam service began between Suez and Bombay and, thanks to Mohammed Ali, the service proved a success. But England wanted to make the transit of her mails through Egypt secure.

Here is what Lord Aberdeen, the Foreign Secretary, wrote to the British Agent in Egypt, Mr. Barnett, on the subject:

> Her Majesty's Government have long been desirous of securing by some fixed and permanent arrangement the transit of the Indian mails through Egypt. Although they have had every reason to be satisfied with the safety and punctuality with which that service has hitherto been performed, they could not shut their eyes to the fact that the advantages which they have enjoyed in this respect depend in a great degree upon the goodwill and forbearance of the present ruler of Egypt, and that his successor, probably at no very distant day, might not be able to discern the immense advantage which accrues to Egypt from its being the highroad between the European and Arabic possessions of the British Crown and might accordingly take measures prejudicial to our interests in regard to the transit between Alexandria and Suez.
>
> The peculiar relation which exists between Mohammed Ali and the Sultan rendered it however a matter of some delicacy how to proceed for the attainment of the object which Her Majesty's Government had in view. They could not enter directly into negotiations with Mohammed Ali or conclude a formal treaty with him, without implying to

a greater or less degree a recognition of his independence of the Sultan . . .[1]

In the end, to avoid political niceties, it was decided that the affair should be negotiated by the English Postmaster-General with Abdel Baki Bey, the president of the State Transit Company created by Mohammed Ali for this purpose. The contract was signed on 16 December 1844 by Abdel Baki Bey on behalf of the company and Mr. Bourne on behalf of the Postmaster-General. It was agreed that the company would receive forty piastres for every British pound of letters and five baras for every newspaper or other printed paper. Travellers would pay £12 from Alexandria to Suez and £9 from Cairo to Suez.

As a token of appreciation Her Majesty Queen Victoria's portrait set in diamonds was presented to Mohammed Ali; and the East India Company presented him with a silver fountain.[2]

In addressing the British Agent Mohammed Ali said: "I set more value on the smallest trifle coming from the hands of the Queen than on all the treasures which the East India Company could offer me."

It only took thirty-one days to convey the mail from London to Bombay by the overland route instead of three months by the long route round the Cape. With the advance in steamship services the overland route increased in importance, to the detriment of the rival route that was then proposed from the Persian Gulf to Aleppo through the Euphrates. The idea finally reached its mature development with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869.

The overland route, Arabia, the Sudan and Egypt, with the new products introduced by Mohammed Ali, opened up considerable commercial prospects for Mohammed Ali, whose agents now resided all over the commercial world. But commercial progress requires two essential adjuncts: ships and markets; the one meaning sea power and the other colonies or dependencies.

[1]Foreign Office Records: Turkey (Egypt). Aberdeen to Barnett, 13 August 1844.

[2]See photograph and note, page 49.

Mohammed Ali, like all great men accused of calculated and predetermined plans, had but to follow the logic of things. The markets he secured by his conquests in Arabia, the Sudan and Syria. Then he turned to sea power.

Bulak could no longer be a sufficient arsenal for the growing naval power of Egypt. The port of Alexandria had to be made the stronghold of Mohammed Ali's navy and the main international depot between East and West. In 1827 Cerisy, a famous French shipbuilder from Toulon, began with Besson, another Frenchman, and Hag Omar, a gifted native shipbuilder of Turkish origin, the momentous task of constructing an arsenal of sixty acres with a half-mile frontage and with a dry dock to receive big ships for repairs. In four years the Arsenal assumed a magnitude that surprised observers from all nations. "Alexandria," said Clot Bey, "equalled Toulon in naval defence". When Cerisy left Egypt in 1834 owing to the intrigues of European shipbuilding firms, Mazhar Pasha, a famous Egyptian engineer, and Mougel Bey, a famous French engineer, were able to continue the work so ably founded by Cerisy. Besides the Marine College started at Alexandria, the famous modern lighthouse of Alexandria was built, and the different trades connected with shipbuilding thrived and attained a high degree of efficiency.

By 1837 Mohammed Ali had eleven ships of the line, of which four were of a hundred guns and upwards, six frigates of sixty guns, four corvettes, seven brigs and three steamers. There were 18,000 seamen, of whom 800 were officers. The maritime drive had its effect on the nation, and the number of vessels that plied on the Nile was 800 belonging to the government and 3,600 in private hands. "The Egyptian Navy," said Dr. Bowring in his report. "is not distinguishable from that of a well disciplined European navy except in uniform."

But all these achievements—arduous, wonderful and original as they were—were overshadowed by a gigantic project meant to secure for Egypt her economic independence. At that time the mercantile policy in economics was much in

vogue, and nations opposed any increase in the amount of their imports from foreign countries. Mohammed Ali was told by his advisers of the immense profits that would accrue to his treasures if Egypt were to supply her own armies, navies and dependencies with the requisite clothing material and munitions.

He had introduced the cultivation of cotton through the efforts of M. Jumel in 1824; he had stimulated the production of silk, linen and indigo. But he was still importing calico, woollens, linen and silk in great quantities. Mohammed Ali's imagination was now aroused by a proposal of his advisers to start large-scale factory industry in Egypt, and so follow the example of England and France, where the industrial revolution had caused big factories to flood the world markets with manufactured goods.

Thus Mohammed Ali, who had monopolised agricultural products, now turned his enthusiasm to making himself the sole proprietor of manufactured goods. With the raw materials near at hand, and with the assurance of procuring cheap labour, he easily surmounted the other difficulties by importing from Europe machines, skilled labour and fuel. Even fuel was replaced by using mules, oxen and camels for producing power.

He began his great scheme in 1818, with two factories in Cairo for the manufacture of coarse woollen cloth for the army. In 1821, when Jumel, a French engineer brought in to supervise the manufacture of woollens, suggested to Mohammed Ali the wide cultivation of cotton and the use of the crop in establishing a cotton industry in Egypt on modern lines, Mohammed Ali lost no time in erecting factories for the ginning, spinning and weaving of cotton. The number of cotton factories increased gradually until there came to be twenty-nine factories scattered all over Lower and Upper Egypt. The factories were usually superintended by French, English or Italian mechanical engineers and worked by Egyptians. Besides these cotton factories there were factories producing sugar, arms and gunpowder, ropes and tarbooshes. There were iron foundries and also steel and copper workshops for the manufacture of iron and steel implements, the smelting of copper, the moulding of cannon, and the making

and repairing of machines and engines. There were spinners, weavers, turners, smiths, engravers, joiners and forgers, all engaged in the vast industrial scheme of Mohammed Ali. Calico, printed calico, muslins, woollens, blankets, ropes, muskets, bayonets, sabres, tarbooshes, all of a creditable quality, were turned out daily, not only for home consumption, but also for the neighbouring Arab markets controlled by Mohammed Ali.

The scheme developed remarkably but it involved Mohammed Ali in tremendous expenses, and his early hopes of great profits were frustrated. Moreover, in 1841, when Mohammed Ali came to an agreement with Turkey, and the number of the standing army of Egypt was limited in the firman of June of that year to 18,000 men, the need for the State factories was no longer much felt. Again, the factories were run at first by Government officials on non-economic lines. The cost of producing several articles in Egypt tended to be more than the cost of the same articles imported from abroad. The dusty weather of the country in some seasons, the disrepair and breakage of machines due to the subtle penetration of dust and the jerky movements of the animals engaged in drawing the power plant—all these were among the factors that led to the final failure of the scheme.

But the main reason for its failure was the commercial treaty of 1838 between Turkey and England, in which it was stipulated that all monopolies were to be abolished and that Europeans could buy and sell any commodity in the native markets without restriction. Imports from foreign countries were to pay only 3 per cent. of their values as duties. As long as Mohammed Ali was at variance with the Porte, this treaty of 1838 was a dead letter so far as Egypt was concerned, but when peace was reached between Mohammed Ali and the Porte the enforcement of the treaty began to take effect as from 1842. From that date Mohammed Ali could no longer protect his industries by imposing duties on foreign imports. Foreign commodities flooded the market at prices below the cost price of home products.

Thus the first attempt to transform Egypt into an industrial as well as an agricultural country ended in failure. It failed because of its premature appearance, its magnitude,

and its "strangeness" to the land. But it failed mainly because of illegitimate foreign competition.

As Mohammed Ali was the sole proprietor and supreme manager of these State establishments, the consequences of this failure were borne by him and the losses fell wholly on the Treasury and not on the people. The nation gained invaluable experience in industry and mechanism. "It is for the purpose of accustoming the people to manufacturing rather than for any profit that I continue my manufacturing operations," remarked Mohammed Ali to Dr. Bowring. This alone entitles Mohammed Ali to our deep gratitude, for it was he who sowed the seeds of Egypt's industrial revival which flourished and bore fruit during and after the First Great War of 1914.

One more public work brings Mohammed Ali's activities as a regenerator to an end. This was the construction of the Nile barrages, the greatest public work ever contemplated in Egypt, to regulate the waters of the Nile by erecting a huge dam with sluices to be opened during the dry season to supply the canals with the water held back and raised to its highest level. The point chosen to construct the barrage was near Cairo, at the apex of the Delta where the Nile divides itself into two branches. In 1835 Mohammed Ali instructed M. Linant de Bellefonds, a French engineer, to supervise the great work ; and it was at this time that the rumour circulated that the great stones of the Pyramids would be moved to construct the great dam! The rumour, wherever it came from, could not have come from Mohammed Ali.

This scheme cost Mohammed Ali, large sums which he had wanted to reserve for the ensuing struggle between him and the Sultan. So the work had to be provisionally abandoned after two years and then taken in hand again by Mougel Bey, another French engineer, in 1847, just two years before the death of Mohammed Ali. The barrages had to be repaired again and again before they could be put into proper working order. Nevertheless, the grandness of this scheme cannot be exaggerated : suffice it to say that it was the precursor to the great Assuan Dam.

Thus was Egypt, through the agency of the army and its appendages, reformed by Mohammed Ali and brought to the threshold of civilisation. That the army should be instrumental in effecting such progress and reform is something of a paradox. It is understandable that in modern civilised states many reforms should emanate from the people and for the people. But in semi-civilised states, progress cannot emanate from the masses. They have to be tutored. The master mind of an enlightened ruler alone can force progress and regeneration on his reluctant people. And since power is the first requisite for a despot, it so happens that armies and navies usually lead the way to further progress and reforms.

MAGNIFICENT PRESENT TO THE PASHA OF EGYPT

The Court of Directors of the East India Company are about to acknowledge the friendly deportment of the Pasha of Egypt towards our country, "in a manner worthy of the greatest political and military power of the East." A silver fountain, of extraordinary magnitude and exquisite workmanship, intended as a present to Mohammed Ali, from the Company, has been designed, modelled, and manufactured, on the premises of Mr. Smith, at Duke-street, Lincoln's-inn-fields, where it has been inspected by many hundred visitors.

This truly magnificent fountain is upwards of 10 feet high, and contains 10,400 oz. (about 7¾ cwt.) of silver. From the top, water is thrown by a jet, by means of an arrangement in the interior; . . . and the water, being thus thrown up, falls into three successive basins, in the form of the Pyramids, and returns, through the centre of the lowermost basin into the reservoir, whence it is again taken up and used on the pump being set in motion. . . .

The base is of quadrangular form, resting on a slab of black marble; it is 4 feet in diameter, and terminates in fluted claws; presenting, altogether, the appearance of a massive and enriched pedestal. . . . It may here be mentioned that the likeness of beast, bird, or fish, is scrupulously avoided throughout the ornaments, in deference to the feelings of good Mahomedans. . . .

The style of ornament throughout is that of Louis Quatorze. On each side of the base is a convex shield bearing the inscription that follows—on each side in a different language:

To His Highness
MOHAMMED ALI
Pasha of Egypt;
Presented by
THE EAST INDIA COMPANY
London, A.D. 1845

The other languages are Turkish, Arabic, and Latin.

The cost of this magnificent work is £7,000. It has occupied somewhat more than seven months in the actual manufacture; and is, we believe, the largest silver work ever executed in this country It is, in every respect, a most superb triumph of English art.

Illustrated London News, 7 June 1845.

Chapter IV

BETWEEN SULTAN AND PASHA

TURKEY has always been primarily a military power. It was by her arms and not by any other virtue that Turkey managed to be the head of the Moslem world and to hold together her loosely bound provinces. The Sultan's hold on these provinces became precarious when his weakness was demonstrated before all the world by his successive defeats and humiliation at the hands of Russia during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Once its military prestige was lowered, the military empire seemed to have forfeited its claim on the provinces for order and obedience ; and as a general rule the provinces were left in a semi-independent state in the hands of provincial chiefs or at the mercy of greedy Pashas.

However, up to the end of the eighteenth century the Ottoman Empire, secluded and veiled from the eyes of Europe by its medieval institutions, still succeeded in presenting a respectable front to the outside world. The edifice was still standing, though its component parts were either inherently rotten or sufficiently loose to drop at the first heavy blow. The blow soon came from the West. The hurricane of the French Revolution and its epilogue, the Napoleonic era, that swept over Europe and roused its people from their political lethargy also beat against the walls of the jerrybuilt empire of the Turks.

According to the peace of Campo Formio in 1797 with the Emperor of Austria, Napoleon had kept the Ionian Islands for France, and the great French conqueror took care to spread his fame and to establish French influence in the islands and the Greek neighbourhood, with the result that a sense of nationalism and independence began to sway the minds of the Sultan's Christian subject in Europe. The first to revolt were the Greeks in the Danubian Principalities, and then those in the Morea itself in 1822.

When the Turkish forces failed to suppress the revolt, the Sultan turned to his powerful vassal Mohammed Ali for help. In 1824 Mohammed Ali was appointed governor of Crete and then governor of the Morea. He was therefore obliged to furnish a naval expedition that would wrest the mastery of the Aegean Sea from the hands of the Greek insurgents, who defied the Turks from their islands. He had also to send a strong military force to subdue the Greeks who were firmly entrenched in their fastnesses in the mountains.

Mohammed Ali saw an opportunity of proving to the European world his own worth and the superiority of his disciplined forces over the Sultan's. The expedition composed of 17,000 men, and about one hundred ships and transports, sailed under the command of Ibrahim Pasha. The fleet under Moharrem Bey, Mohammed Ali's son-in-law, proceeded first to effect a contract with the Turkish fleet. Both fleets were able to force the Archipelago, but the Greeks inflicted so much damage on them that Ibrahim was obliged to take refuge for some time in Crete. There he remained until his ships were repaired and until news reached him of the difference of opinion among the European powers with regard to the Greek question; and then in February 1825 Ibrahim set sail and managed to land on the Morea. Thereupon the Greek insurrection entered a new phase. The insurgents, who depended on a guerrilla warfare, were no match for Ibrahim's trained soldiers. The revoluntionary strongholds fell one after the other: in 1826 Missolonghi fell after a siege of fifteen months and then Athens in June 1827. The whole of Morea and the Archipelago were held by Ibrahim, and only Nauplia, the headquarters of the rebels, and a few islands remained in the hands of the insurgents.

At this point public opinion in Europe interfered, and forced the governments to act quickly to save the Christian Greeks from certain destruction at the hands of Ibrahim. The political theories that then governed Europe were absolutely incompatible with the ideals of the Greek insurrection. Metternich and the Concert of Europe were no more friends of revolution against the Sultan than of revolution against the kings of Naples or Spain, even though the Sultan was no member of the Holy Alliance.

But suddenly things took a new turn when the Egyptian expedition in the Morea threatened the very existence of the Greeks. The clamour of public opinion, especially in Russia, the traditional foe of Turkey, and the fear that Russia would interfere to further her own interests in the Balkans and the Mediterranean—all these things drove England, France and Russia to act together even without the collaboration of Metternich, who was afraid lest a similar revolution should break out in Austria's own provinces. The Treaty of London (1827) was agreed upon, declaring the separation of Greece from Turkey and the cessation of hostilities under threat of force to be employed by the Allies. When the Porte wavered, the Battle of Navarino was fought on 20 October 1827, and in a few hours the Turco-Egyptian armada ceased to exist. But this did not settle the Greek question. Greek independence was won as a result of the war that ensued in 1829 between Russia and Turkey, and which caused England and France to insist on the independence of Greece in order to prevent Russia gaining too great influence there.

Mohammed Ali had to choose between satisfying Turkey and opposing the European powers or holding himself neutral and thus winning Europe to his side. He chose the latter course, and sent instructions to his son to withdraw his forces from the Morea and establish friendly relations with the French forces that came under Marechal Maison to supervise the evacuation of the peninsula.

When Adrianople fell in 1829 and the Russians proceeded to threaten Constantinople, the Turks hastened to accept the Treaty of Adrianople, by the terms of which Turkey recognised the independence of Greece, which independence became complete in 1830.

This dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire was only natural and inevitable. The Danubian Principalities, Greece, and then Egypt and other provinces later on were like stones falling from a crumbling edifice. All these provinces succeeded in detaching themselves from the direct hold of the Ottoman Empire, which had no power to retain them. To a large extent this happened spontaneously, and as a result of internal movements in these provinces; but, in the case of the European states, with the help of the Powers. In the case

of Egypt and Mohammed Ali, the Powers interfered against them and reaffirmed the policy of preserving the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Perhaps the Powers forgot that the Sultan's subjects whether Moslems, Christians or Jews, whether Europeans or not, were all victims of the same insecurity, the same injustice and disaffection. Perhaps also the Powers thought it impossible for the head of a Moslem nation to take up arms with success against the Sultan, who was also the supreme head of the Faithful.

Mohammed Ali was soon to prove to the Powers the mistakenness of their policy with regard to the Sultan and to prove that Egypt, an oriental nation, had as much claim to be an independent country as any of their satellites in the Balkans.

Mohammed Ali was by no means the first to challenge the authority of the Sultan during this period. The Pashas of Janina, of Baghdad, and of Acca had all defied their sovereign; but not one of those Pashas was powerful enough to oppose him for any length of time. It was reserved for Mohammed Ali to strike at the heart of the empire and, with the full cognisance of the Powers, to dictate his own terms to the Porte.

Mohammed Ali could have struck the Sultan with success after the Greek insurrection, when all his campaigns had been brought to a successful end, when both his army and navy were heartened by victory, and when the name of the restorer of the sacred cities was on the lips of all the faithful. But Mohammed Ali was shrewd enough to keep his political connections with the Sultan intact until the moment was ripe. For the time being his position was secured by the fact that he was a member of the empire whose integrity and independence were so loudly professed by the Powers, though only in mere words.

Moreover, he had been the most active and loyal Pasha of the Sultan. He had drained his resources to conduct the protracted Wahhabi expedition over a period of ten years. And even more worthy of notice was his expedition to the Morea in response to the Sultan's urgent call.

It was now that Mohammed Ali made his debut on the political stage of Europe, and the spectators must have been

struck by the power and the resources of the vassal as compared with those of the sovereign. After the intervention of the Powers Mohammed Ali had no intention of endangering his position in Egypt, or of exposing his ports to blockade by the Allies for the sake of the Sultan. When in 1828 General Maison warned Ibrahim against his further stay in the Morea, Mohammed Ali, without waiting for the Sultan's word, instructed Ibrahim to evacuate the peninsula, thus establishing peace between himself and the Powers, leaving the Sultan to carry on the struggle alone with the Czar of Russia. As a sign of his indignation, the Sultan withdrew his former offer of the pashalik of Acca, which was intended as a substitute for the loss of the Morea, leaving only the government of Crete in the hands of Mohammed Ali.

This provoked Mohammed Ali into revising his policy towards the Porte, and when the latter was at war with the Russians, Mohammed Ali was secretly planning a new role. As soon as the expedition returned from Greece, Ibrahim prepared the minds of his men for a rupture with the Sultan: "What have I or any of you benefited from the Sultan? Have we not all eaten the bread of Mohammed Ali? Have we not all been brought up by him as his children? Egypt is his and he won it by the sword. We know no sovereign but Mohammed Ali." Why should the Sultan be allowed to thwart Mohammed Ali in his ambitions and stand in his way to dominion and power? Did he not deliver the sacred cities from the ravaging hands of the Wahhabis, after a most obstinate campaign wholly conducted by himself? Was not Mohammed Ali the undisputed lord of an Arabic-speaking empire, stretching from Candia to the Persian Gulf and from the Mediterranean to the sources of the White Nile? Were not his armies feared, respected and triumphant wherever they marched? Was he not therefore entitled to special treatment at the hands of the Sultan?

Sultan Mahmud II, it should be said, was a despot of a most passionate character. He came to the throne in 1809 as a result of a revolution in which one Sultan was murdered by the Janissaries and another deposed after a few days' rule. Mahmud had a most fickle temper, at times extremely violent, at others utterly dejected; sometimes very strong-

headed, at others absolutely helpless. Yet Mahmud was a sovereign who really wanted to reform his country on Western lines, although unfortunately his attempts at reform met with opposition and failure. That he should fail where Mohammed Ali his vassal had so signally succeeded, galled him beyond measure and roused him against Mohammed Ali, whose brilliant success in war and in peace added lustre to his name and made the Sultan frantic with jealousy and passion for revenge.

So when in the year 1831 Abdullah Pasha, the governor of Acca, complained to the Sultan of Mohammed Ali's aggressive attitude towards him, the Sultan encouraged Abdullah to refuse Mohammed Ali's claims. Mohammed Ali was ostensibly asking for timber to be imported to Egypt for building his ships, and demanding that the fellaheen who had fled the country to escape conscription should be repatriated to Egypt. Abdullah's failure to comply with his demands gave Mohammed Ali a pretext for punishing the Pasha of Acca, and for realising his well-conceived plans for conquest and dominion.

From a military point of view Mohammed Ali saw in Syria the key to Egypt, for at that time there was no Suez Canal guarding Egypt from the East. It was proved conclusively to him by his French advisers that the real eastern frontiers of Egypt lay not in the Arabian Desert but at the Taurus Mountains, the gates of Asia Minor. From an economic point of view, the forests of Syria supplied what Egypt always lacked—wood for fuel and timber for its ships. Thus was Mohammed Ali convinced of the expediency of annexing Syria, and on November 1, Ibrahim at the head of an Egyptian expedition consisting of 36,000 men landed in Syria and the siege of Acca soon began.

At the outset Mohammed Ali was modest enough to proceed only as far as Acca; but gradually the defiant attitude of the Sultan emboldened Mohammed Ali to proceed farther and farther until the road to Constantinople was reached. "In a few days Acca will be mine," said Mohammed Ali to the Turkish envoy who had been sent to Alexandria before the climax of the war was reached. "If the Sultan consents that I keep it, I will stop there; if not, I will take Damascus.

There again, if Damascus be granted me, I will stop there; but if not, I will take Aleppo. And if the Sultan will not consent, well, who knows? *Allah kerim*! (God is bountiful)."

The envoy on returning counselled the Porte to give way to this man of great determination, and was consequently sent to prison. Both Sultan Mahmud and his vizier Khosrew, an old enemy of Mohammed Ali were anxious to strike at the power of the Pasha, and feverishly began to equip a Turkish force. A decree deposing the insurgent viceroy and nominating Hussein Pasha the commander of the invading Turkish army in his place was issued. The ulema of Istanbul published a *fetwa* outlawing Mohammed Ali and his son Ibrahim.

It was at this time that Mohammed Ali was accused of having schemed to dethrone the Sultan and proclaim himself Khalifa at Constantinople. There can be no doubt that at this juncture Mohammed Ali must have expressed himself and acted disloyally, but his utterances and acts did not exceeded the limit of expressing his wish to depose Mahmud and dismiss Khosrew, and then proclaim Mahmud's infant son Sultan and create a council of regency with himself at his head. And in order to reciprocate the firman of outlawry against him, Mohammed Ali, like Emperor Frederick II, saw fit to excommunicate the Pontifex himself by ordering the Sherif of Mecca to deliver a sentence to that effect.

Meanwhile the strong fortress of Acca, which had defied Napoleon in 1799, surrendered to Ibrahim after a siege of six months. The fall of Acca was the signal for a general rising in favour of Mohammed Ali. The Emir Bechir of Lebanon now openly embraced the cause of Mohammed Ali, and his valiant mountaineers began to join Ibrahim's forces. From all sides the people, led by their municipal heads, hastened to tender their submission and to take up arms against the Turks. They were impressed by the disciplined behaviour of the Egyptian troops, who paid money for everything they bought or requisitioned. Town after town opened its gates to the army of the deliverer. After Acca, Damascus, Aleppo, Jerusalem, Tripoli and Antioch surrendered without a blow. Ibrahim met the Turkish army at Homs, Hamah, and Beilan successively and at all these places the Turkish army was easily baten. At Beilan on 29 July 1832 the

Turkish army was routed and Hussein Pasha, the titular Pasha of Egypt, was taken prisoner. The battle of Beilan gave Ibrahim the command of the Taurus Mountains, and his army soon marched through its defiles and descended into the vast plains of Asia Minor. Adana, on the southern coast of Asia Minor, which was famous for its timber, was occupied at the express orders of Mohammed Ali. Ibrahim then advanced westwards and camped at Konieh, an admirable defensive position. There he wintered and manœuvred his troops in readiness to meet the Sultan's second army under Rechid Mohammed Pasha, Ibrahim's colleague in the siege of Missolonghi and the second titular Pasha of Egypt.

The flying success of the Egyptian armies roused the apprehensions of the Sultan. He appealed to the Powers for help, but Europe was then occupied with national outbursts on the Continent and in England. The Sultan had especially wanted the naval help of England which, if granted, would have saved Acca and paralysed Mohammed Ali's military activities. In reply to the Turkish request, England replied that "naval assistance was a matter of greater difficulty than at first sight it would appear to be."

Lord Palmerston, the Foreign Secretary, alone favoured the request and was overruled. "Twice," wrote Palmerston to Lord Melbourne, the Prime Minister, "my opinion on these affairs has been overruled by the Cabinet, and twice the policy which I recommended has been set aside: first in 1833 when the Sultan sent to ask our aid before Mohammed Ali had made any material progress in Syria . . ."[1] But in the House of Commons Palmerston had to defend the policy approved by the Cabinet. He said: "Occupied before Holland and Portugal, it would have been impossible to have sent to the Sultan a squadron that would have comported with the naval dignity of Great Britain."[2]

When the only quarter from which the Sultan could safely hope for assistance disappointed him, Mahmud ordered his generals to advance and give battle to Ibrahim, firmly established behind his defensive lines at Konieh. Rechid, who was at the head of a picked force nearly double that of Ibrahim,

1 Bulwer, *Life of Palmerston*, ii, 360.

2 *Hansard*, 11 July 1833.

was of the opinion that he should hold a defensive position to cover Constantinople and await the enemy; but the Sultan's order set the commander's strategy at naught. The famous Battle of Konieh was fought on 19 December 1832, and once more the destruction of the Turks was complete. The road to Constantinople now lay open before Ibrahim.

The decisive battle of Konieh brought the Sultan to his knees. He was now bound to humble his pride and ask for peace from Mohammed Ali, and for assistance from Russia, his two most inveterate enemies. The Porte sent an envoy to negotiate for peace with Mohammed Ali, and in January 1833 General Muravieff, the Czar's envoy, landed at Alexandria to overawe Mohammed Ali with the wrath of Nicholas I if he refused the terms of peace offered by the Sultan.

Though struck with gloom and apprehension at the interference of Russia, Mohammed Ali, who was an assiduous student of European policy, politely refused the Sultan's terms; but to oblige the Czar of Russia he issued orders for Ibrahim, now in full march towards the capital, to halt. The orders found Ibrahim at Kutahya and there he halted.

But the Sultan, fearing that Ibrahim and internal rebellion would imperil his throne, not only accepted Russia's naval aid, but also asked for a Russian expedition to land at Scutari, on the Asiatic side of the Sea of Marmora. On February 1833 a Russian squadron of nine ships anchored in the Bosphorus, opposite Therapia, where the British and French embassies were. The Sultan must have been aware that to invoke protection from Russia would lower him in the estimation of Europe and, above all, of his own subjects. But the passionate Sultan preferred that to seeing his inveterate enemy planting his foot on the shores of the Bosphorus. To the remonstrances of both England and France, the Turkish Minister replied that "a drowning man will clutch at a serpent!" "What signifies the Empire to me?" exclaimed Mahmud in his rage. "What signifies Constantinople? I would give both to the man who brought me the head of Mohammed Ali!"[1]

France and England, who were bound at this time by an *entente*, viewed the situation with extreme gravity. England was a strong upholder of the Ottoman Empire, but France had

1 Guizot, *Memoires*, iv, 50.



WARS BETWEEN PASHA AND SULTAN
Approximate Boundaries
Ibrahim's Route
0 50 100 200 300 400
Miles
BLACK SEA
Bosphorus
Constantinople
Marmora
Scutari
Dardanelles
Bruse
TURKEY
A N A T O L I A
Angora
Kutahya
Konieh
TAURUS MOUNTAINS
Adana
Nizib
Rhodes
Beilan
Antioch
Haleb
Euphrates
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Cyprus
Hamah
Homs
Tripoli
Beyrout
Damascus
Acca
Haifa
Alexandria
Jaffa
Jerusalem
Gaza
El Arish
Salhieh
Cairo
EGYPT

a double-faced policy. She wanted both to support the Ottoman Empire and to strengthen Egypt.

The fear of an isolated Russian action brought England, who was by no means in favour of Mohammed Ali's aggrandisement, into line with the policy of France, the patron of Mohammed Ali. Impressed by the power and prestige of Mohammed Ali, England hastened to send Colonel Campbell to act as British Political Agent and Consul-General at the court of Mohammed Ali, "to assure him of those sentiments of personal respect and esteem which His Majesty, the King entertains for His Highness . . . and to cultivate and maintain the friendship which now so happily exists between the two countries."

France sent Admiral Roussin to Constantinople to act as a special ambassador. He at once considered the presence of a Russian squadron in the Bosphorus a serious blow to Anglo-French interests. The policy he laid down was clear: to obviate the fatal consequences which such a grave situation might produce. He knew very well that unless peace between the Sultan and the Pasha was settled, the withdrawal of the Russian force would not be possible. He therefore sent his first aide-de-camp to Mohammed Ali urging on him the acceptance of the Sultan's terms.

Roussin's letter amounted to a threat of war against the Viceroy: ". . . A persistence in the pretensions which have been put forth will call down upon your head consequences, the disastrous nature of which will, I hope, excite your apprehension. France will keep the engagements which I have entered into; she has the power and I am the guarantee of her will. It only remains for me to hope that you will not force us to the cruel necessity of attacking a power partly created by ourselves, and tarnishing a glory of which I am the sincere admirer."[1]

Mohammed Ali sent a polite rejection of Roussin's proposal: ". . . Pray, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, how have you the right to call on me to sacrifice myself thus? I have in my favour the whole nation. It only rests with me to raise up Rumelia and Anatolia. United with my nation I could effect much. To demand of me the abandonment of the countries

1 Guizot, *Memoires*, iv, 535.

which I occupy is pronouncing against me a sentence of political death. But I feel confident that France and England will not deny me justice."

Mohammed Ali was in fact resolved to extend his rule over all Syria, and over Adana in Asia Minor as well. He then had the power not only to enforce his claims over territories which he was occupying, but also to bring about a general European conflagration by seizing Constantinople. To prove that he was in earnest, Mohammed Ali despatched several regiments to Syria and directed Ibrahim to march on Constantinople, if the Porte had not within a few days complied with his terms.

Mohammed Ali's firm stand made Roussin modify his attitude towards him. Roussin and Mandeville, his English colleague, pressed the dismayed Sultan to concede the territories demanded by Mohammed Ali. And such was the urgency of the situation that a diplomatic delegation from Constantinople proceeded to Ibrahim's headquarters at Kutahya to concede all Syria. But Ibrahim insisted on the cession of Adana as a preliminary to his retirement beyond the Taurus. The Sultan reluctantly consented, and on 8 April 1833 the Convention of Kutahya was agreed upon. But on his way back Ibrahim learned that the cession of the district of Adana was not mentioned in the official gazette announcing the pashaliks in charge of Mohammed Ali. Ibrahim thereupon arrested the homeward march of his army, and Mahmud had to cede Adana to Ibrahim with the title of revenue collector and not of governor. On July 10, the evacuation of Asia Minor having been carried out by Ibrahim, the Czar's forces embarked and the Russian squadron sailed out of the Bosphorus.

On 16 May 1833 a hundred discharges of artillery fire from the forts of Alexandria announced the re-establishment of peace between Mohammed Ali and his sovereign. But this peace was bought at a price that sowed discord in Europe. Mahmud had been taught a lesson. In his extreme need, he had turned to the Powers for help. All gave him words except Russia, who, though not his professed friend like the others, offered him warships and men. So the Sultan decided that it was from Russia alone that he could expect help in future and to Russia alone he confided his favours. On the day following

the announcement of peace between the Sultan and the Pasha, Russia, to counteract the influence of Admiral Roussin, sent Count Orloff to Constantinople, invested with the special titles of "Ambassadeur Extraordinaire et Commandant Generale des Forces Russes dans l'Empire Ottoman." The apparent object of his mission was to see that Constantinople was safe and that Asia Minor was completely evacuated by Ibrahim. But since Ibrahim had already started his withdrawal from Asia Minor, Count Orloff set to work at once to achieve the true object of his mission. He began the task of convincing the Ministers of the Porte that their future safety solely depended on the degree of support which Russia might be disposed to afford them. Conferences were held secretly between Orloff and the Porte, and on 8 July 1833, two days before the departure of the Russian forces, the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi was concluded between the Czar and the Sultan. It was a defensive and an offensive treaty of the most intimate character.

The whole importance of the treaty lay in a secret clause. To reciprocate the military assistance from Russia the Porte was asked to close the Dardanelles "au besoin" (in time of need) to warships of all nations. "The ancient rule which declared the Straits closed to all warships was at this time fully acknowledged by the Powers; but the treaty signed at the Place of Unkiar while confirming the closure of the Dardanelles to all warships of all nations omitted any mention of the Bosphorus which connects the Black Sea with the Sea of Marmora, and along which Constantinople itself stands. So that Russia at her own convenience could by the treaty navigate her fleet through the Bosphorus to defend or to invest Constantinople as she pleased.

The treaty, therefore, knitted France and England closer. They protested at Constantinople and St. Petersburg. They pointed out to both governments that the treaty placed the relations of Turkey with Russia upon a new footing, as a result of which the French and English governments would act in future as if the treaty never existed.[1] In reply, Russia asserted that the treaty had changed a state of suspicion and hostility into one of confidence and intimacy. The Czar was determined

1 Foreign Office Records: Turkey. Despatch No. 50, 1833.

to carry out his obligations under the treaty as though the declarations of both France and England did not exist.[1]

Russia sincerely wanted to preserve the *status quo* in Turkey, and to guard her against internal or external movements that should threaten to disturb her sublime repose. Thus the position was created by Russia in which the Ottoman Empire might, by judicious management and without the expense of further conquests, be brought into a state of habitual dependence upon Russia, who had alone proved her worth to Turkey by sending reinforcements to stop the triumphal march of Ibrahim in Anatolia.

1 Foreign Office Records: Russia. Bligh to Palmerston 2 November 1833.

CHAPTER V

EUROPEAN CRISIS OVER EGYPT

IN his speech from the throne on 4 February 1834, King William IV of England said: "The peace of Turkey since the settlement was made with Mehemet Ali had not been interrupted, and will not, I trust, be threatened with new dangers." Referring to the latest relations between Russia and Turkey, the King added: "It will be my object to prevent any change in the relations of that Empire (the Ottoman Empire) with other Powers which might affect its future stability and independence."[1] This reassuring tone was purposely adopted to quiet the alarm caused by the recent actions of Russia and to give hint of the Government's intention of pursuing a more determined policy in future with regard to the East. In actual fact, peace in Turkey, though formally settled, was threatened in many ways. When Sultan Mahmud II unwillingly accepted the terms of the Kutahya settlement he swore vengeance, and everyone in contact with the Porte knew that the settlement meant nothing but an armed truce.

Turkey was encouraged in her belligerent attitude towards Mohammed Ali by the foreign policy of Palmerston, who had won the confidence of the Porte by expressing his dissatisfaction with the settlement of Kutahya, and by impressing upon the Porte the necessity of increasing the efficiency of the Turkish army. Palmerston's policy was actively expounded by Ponsonby, the British Ambassador at Constantinople, whose hatred of Russia was only exceeded by his enmity for Mohammed Ali, whom he regarded as a sore sapping the Ottoman Empire of its strength. Ponsonby's influence with the Porte became overwhelming. His agents traversed Syria and Asia Minor, secretly inciting the people against Mohammed Ali and reporting on the military condition of the country. Prussian officers, amongst whom was the famous Von Moltke,

1 *Hansard*, 4 February 1834

were engaged to renovate the Turkish Army. Hafiz Pasha, a favourite general of the Sultan's, was appointed governor of Mesopotamia with the sole purpose of raising an army and familiarising himself with the adjoining terrain, the theatre of future operations.

Thus Mohammed Ali's position in relation to his suzerain became irksome and untenable. He had to subdue revolts in Lebanon and Syria fomented by the Sultan's agents. Besides the tribute which amounted to £T.60,000 a year, the Porte never failed to trump up excuses for extorting more money. In one year these exactions amounted to about a million and a half dollars.[1] And when we bear in mind that Mohammed Ali had to spend a great part of his revenue in developing the resources of his recent acquisitions and in augmenting his naval and military forces, we can imagine the effect of such exorbitant demands on his treasury. If he had had any confidence in the future, he would have accepted the Sultan's demands with a good grace. But the bellicose intentions of Mahmud were but flimsily concealed, and Mohammed Ali's agents hastened to convey to him the Sultan's secret orders. At any time the Sultan's army in Mesopotamia might overrun Syria and threaten Egypt, so that Mohammed Ali's own safety as well as the safety of his family and friends was at stake. The maintenance of a strong army and a fleet became a vital necessity for the security of all that was dear to Mohammed Ali. But the army and navy were sapping the male population and the revenues of the land; and the fair Egypt which Mohammed Ali had created was becoming a sort of milch cow to provide means for guarding against the Sultan's revenge.

No wonder therefore that Mohammed Ali in May 1838, just a year before the outbreak of the Second Syrian War, tried to find a way out of his anomalous position. This time he was determined to take the bull by the horns and face the Powers with his resolve to put an end to his troubles once and for all by declaring his independence of the Porte. It was modern Egypt's first step on the long and arduous way to independence.

[1] In his pamphlet published in 1837, Lieutenant Waghorn of the Overland Route mentions the fact that in 1837 the Sultan received $100,000 dollars on the occasion of the marriage of his daughter, $600,000 to help in paying the indemnity due to Russia, and $350,000 for the tenure of Canadia.

On 15 May 1838 Mohammad Ali called the Consuls-General for an audience, and communicated to them his desire to declare himself independent in the following words, as reported by Mr. Campbell, the British Agent and Consul-General, to Lord Palmerston: "Mohammed Ali says that he never can consent that all that which he has been toiling for and all the useful and costly establishments founded by him at an enormous expense, such as his arsenals, his fleet, his steam vessels, his factories with European machines and with workmen either Europeans or natives who have been educated by him at great expense in Europe—the numerous useful schools and literary institutions which he has established entirely on the European system, the mines which he has opened both of coal and iron in Syria and the roads and canals made there and in Egypt—he cannot, he says, ever permit all those establishments to revert to the Porte and to be lost at his death, and that he should have the pang of feeling that all his labours should merely have been for the Porte, which would allow them to go to ruin whilst his own children and family would be exposed to want and perhaps to be put to death."[1]

"I feel confident, My Lord," said the British Agent, "that no remonstrances on the part of the Great Powers will now make him abandon his long formed intention, and that he is resolved to run every risk for the object which he has now declared."

Unfortunately none of the Powers favoured the step. Palmerston wrote back that "Her Majesty's Government at once and decidedly pronounce the successful execution of the attempt to be impossible and its inevitable consequences to be ruin to the Pasha."[2]

The French Government, a staunch partisan of Mohammed Ali, replied that it had learnt with as much surprise as regret the determination of Mohammed Ali to proclaim his independence of the Porte. "The French Government," the note added, "is firmly resolved that in case the Viceroy gives effect to his threat; not only not to acknowledge the new position

[1] Foreign Office Records: Turkey (Egypt). Campbell to Palmerston, 25 May 1838.

[2] Ibid. Palmerston to Campbell, 7 July 1838.

which he would assume, but also to declare that they would regard that step as not having taken place, and would oppose to it every obstacle in their power, and would begin by sending a squadron before Alexandria and on the coast of Syria."[1]

To add to all these threats, Palmerston made it clear to Mohammed Ali that "if hostilities should break out between the Sultan and the Pasha, the Pasha must expect to find Great Britain taking part with the Sultan . . . and the Pasha would fatally deceive himself if he were to suppose that any jealousies among the Powers of Europe would prevent those Powers from affording to Sultan every assistance which might be necessary for this purpose of upholding, enforcing and vindicating his just and legitimate rights."[2]

Nesselrode, the Russian Chancellor, answered that the task of Europe was to uphold the *status quo*; and Metternich, the reactionary Austrian Chancellor, said typically that "the repose of the world should not be disturbed," thus implying that Egypt's independence would inevitably upset the balance of power in the Mediterranean world.

Mohammed Ali was therefore left no choice but to depent on his arms. He could not hope for help from either France or England. But though Mohammed Ali was conscious of Palmerston's ill will towards him, he had endeavoured by every means in his power to win the good wishes of the English Government. He had sent missions to England; afforded invaluable help to the success of the overland route to India; and acquiesced, though with a bad grace, in the occupation of Aden by the British Indian troops in 1837. In face of all these proofs of friendship, Palmerston had to modify his policy with regard to Mohammed Ali. He sent Bowring, a prominent member of Parliament, to Egypt and the Near East to report officially on the state of affairs and the progress made in Mohammed Ali's dominions. He instructed his ambassador in Constantinople to press strongly on the Sultan that, while on the one hand Great Britain would undoubtedly assist him to repel any attack on the part of Mohammed Ali, it would, on the other hand, be a different question if the war was begun by

[1] Foreign Office Records : France. Cochlet to Boghos Bey, 16 August 1838.

[2] Ibid: Turkey (Egypt). Palmerston to Campbell. 7 July 1838.

the Sultan. But further than that Palmerston would not go In vain did Mohammed Ali request the British and French government to procure for him the right of heredity and so preserve peace in the East.

In his despair Mohammed Ali set out for the Sudan to inspect his gold mines, and told Campbell, the British Agent, that if he returned with plenty of gold, he would not require friends or armies to arrange with the Porte. Such was the extraordinary activity of the man that, though he was over seventy years of age, he embarked on a perilous voyage along the then unexplored Nile to the Sudan.

But the Sultan was not going to wait for the gold of Mohammed Ali, and while the latter was away, he feverishly concentrated his troops on the borders of Syria. Sultan Mahmud was getting old and his passion for revenge grew with his dotage. He therefore risked a war when all his friends thought that Mohammed Ali, being the stronger, would strike first.

When war actually broke out in May 1839, with the Turks crossing the boundary between Mesopotamia and Syria, Campbell hastened to assert confidentially to Palmerston that it was never the Pasha's intention to be the active aggressor or to pass the frontiers of Syria or to attack the Sultan's forces, and that he (Campbell) was borne out in that view by the opinion of the Consuls-General of the Great Powers.[2]

At Constantinople, the Powers had warned the Sultan against plunging into war. The Russian Ambassador plainly declared to the Porte that Russian assistance to the Turkish Government, stipulated in the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, could not be claimed if the Turks were the aggressors in a war against Mohammed Ali.[3] Austria, Prussia and France also gave warnings; but Ponsonby, the British Ambassador, used a different language. When, just before the outbreak of war, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs complained to Ponsonby of some legations (meaning France) "that give the most pressing counsels to the Sublime Porte not to undertake war,

1 Foreign Office Records: Turkey (Egypt)). Campbell to Palmerston, 11 August 1838.

2 Ibid. Campbell to Palmerston, 7 May 1839.

3 Ibid. Ponsonby to Palmerston, 27 January 1839.

and asked if England would permit those governments to attack them by force, the British Ambassador replied that he could not suppose the British Government would ever concur with or sanction any attempt to deprive the Sublime Porte of the exercise of any of the rights of sovereignty, and that he had no reason whatever to believe that the British fleet would interrupt. He only hoped that the Porte had taken the best measures to secure success."[1]

Encouraged by these ingenious and wily promptings, the Sultan was tempted to listen to the exaggerated reports of his general Hafiz. The Sultan knew that he could not be the loser in the long run. If victory favoured his arms, well and good; and if not, then England and Russia would never tolerate his annihilation at the hands of Mohammed Ali.

The two armies stood facing each other, the Egyptians, 60,000 strong, concentrating on their own territory under Ibrahim at Anitab, and the Turks, numbering 80,000, under Hafiz near the village of Nezib. Although Hafiz had already commenced hostilities by inciting the population under Mohammed Ali to revolt, by distributing arms and money and above all by harassing an Egyptian cavalry corps within Syrian territory, Ibrahim had strict orders from his farher, who had returned in haste from the Sudan, not to be the aggressor. When Ibrahim informed his father of the hostile acts committed by the Turks, Mohammed Ali, sent him orders to repel the Turkish attacks and to cross the frontiers if necessary. "The more patient and circumspect we have been," said Mohammed Ali, "in order not to act contrary to the wishes of the Great Powers, the more have our adversaries advanced. ... If we have patience any longer, we shall be unable to stop them."[2]

War began and the doom of the Ottoman Empire was no longer in doubt.

The Powers were now brought face to face with the fears that had caused them so much anxiety since the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, namely the possibility of a Russian squadron anchoring outside Constantinople. It was now their bounden

[1] Foreign Office Records: Turkey. Ponsonby to Palmerston, 22 May 1839.

[2] Levant Correspondence, part ii, No. 94, 10 June 1839.

duty to obviate a situation that could afford Russia an excuse for fulfilling her obligations under the treaty. It was therefore decided that both the British and French Mediterranean fleets should proceed to the Levant and do their utmost to induce the opposing generals to suspend hostilities. They also instructed their ambassadors at Constantinople to intimate to the Porte that if the Russian fleet should, for any reason whatever, enter the Bosphorus, permission would be given to the British and French fleets to do the same.[1]

France, sincerely desirous to prevent unnecessary bloodshed, sent two officers to Constantinople and Alexandria respectively. Both of them carried orders for the commanding generals to halt wherever they were. Captain Caillier, who was sent to Mohammed Ali, eventually succeeded in carrying Mohammed Ali's orders for Ibrahim to halt; but by the time he reached Ibrahim's camp, the Battle of Nezib had been fought and won on 24 June 1839.

The Turkish army was routed in a few hours by the Egyptian artillery and cavalry alone; the infantry did not fire one single shot in the fight.[2]

The Prussian Ambassador at the Porte was the first to receive the news of the disaster from the Prussian staff accompanying the Turks. Hafiz, it was said, acted in direct opposition to the counsels given by the Prussian officers. He risked a battle in the open plain because he thought it a disgrace to fight behind ditches and walls.[3]

The news of the disaster never reached the ears of its author. Sultan Mahmud, who had succumbed to pain and grief on 30 June. The news was kept secret and the new Sultan, Abdul Mejid, a boy of sixteen, ascended the throne unattended by the customary riots and carnage. But misfortunes befell the Porte one after the other. On July 8, the same day on which the news of Nezib reached Constantinople, Ahmed Fawzi Pasha, the captain pasha and admiral of the Turkish fleet, suspecting mischief from Khosrew Pasha, the Russophile Grand Vizier, veered his fleet, consisting of seven ships of the line and ten frigates, towards Alexandria. The men

[1] Foreign Office Records: Turkey. Palmerston to Ponsonby, 18 July 1839.

[2] Ibid. Prussia. Hamilton to Palmerston, 24 July 1839.

[3] Ibid. Hamilton to Palmerston, 24 July 1839.

and the majority of the officers, including Admiral Walker, were expecting action against the Egyptian port, when to their surprise they were met with salutes and artillery greetings.

The whole Turkish fleet was thus voluntarily put into the hands of Mohammed Ali, the only man in the East who could be entrusted with the future destinies of Islam and the Khalifate.

Mohammed Ali's exultation at the event was indescribable. Fate was playing havoc with his enemy, and was placing in his hands the material that could have wreaked disaster on him.

Thus in a fortnight, the Turkish Empire had lost its sovereign, its army and its fleet. The Ottoman Empire was placed in such a situation that "henceforward the protection of Europe and the prudence of Mohammed Ali were the only guarantees which remained to the throne of Abdul Mejid."

On hearing of the successive disasters, the Grand Vizier was discreet enough to try and conciliate his inveterate enemy, Mohammed Ali. He sent an envoy to him, apparently to announce the accession of Abdul Mejid, though really to negotiate for peace based on an offer of the hereditary possession of Egypt to Mohammed Ali. But Mohammed Ali, elated by his recent successes, demanded the hereditary grant of both Egypt and Syria. The Turkish envoy returned home with a friendly letter and handsome presents.

To the Chancelleries of Europe, the successive disasters that befell the Ottoman Empire brought consternation. Palmerston in particular was indignant at Mohammed Ali's triumph. He could not bear to see Turkey lying prostrate at the feet of a military adventurer. In the House of Commons he did not hesitate to tell his critics that as Nezib was placed outside Mohammed Ali's territories, he could not see how the Sultan could be regarded as the aggressor.[1] To his ambassador at Vienna he wrote that "the result of the battle of June the 24th cannot entitle Mohammed Ali to any greater favour from the five Powers, but rather the contrary, because the battle was fought in defiance of the remonstrances and warnings of the Powers."[2]

[1] *Hansard*, 20 August 1839; 27 March 1840.

[2] Foreign Office Records: Austria. Palmerston to Beauvale, 26 July 1839.

The defection of the Ottoman fleet infuriated Palmerston more than anything, for it showed the trend of Turkish public opinion. That the whole fleet should betray the cause of the Sultan and declare itself in favour of Mohammed Ali, galled Palmerston beyond measure. He therefore communicated with the French Government for the purpose of undertaking direct action to wrest the fleet from the hands of Mohammed Ali. The French replied that an act of hostility against Mohammed Ali would not facilitate the plan proposed by England and France in concert.[1]

The refusal of France to join England in coercing Mohammed Ali was the first inkling of the misunderstanding that nearly brought the two governments to war at this time. Mohammed Ali was regarded by France as her natural ally, and she thought it her moral duty to protect him and secure the best terms for him. But, in spite of her political feelings, France was bound to unite with England in order to isolate Russia. She therefore proposed the publication of a collective note signed by all the Powers, in which it was stated that while giving full approbation to the conciliatory sentiments of the Porte, they would insist upon nothing being done precipitately, and would interdict all treaties with the Viceroy except those made through the intervention and the concurrence of the Porte's allies, whose co-operation would undoubtedly provide the best means of securing terms, better guaranteed and less disadvantageous.[2]

This invitation, especially coming from France, was highly satisfactory to both England and Austria, who thought it high time that the Concert of Europe should do something not only to restrain Russia, but also to check the exorbitant demands of Mohammed Ali, who through his influence in Constantinople was on the point of securing very advantageous terms for himself.

It was believed that a deputation from the Porte was about to proceed to Alexandria and offer Mohammed Ali the hereditary possession of Egypt and a part of Syria, if not the whole of it. On 28 July 1839, just before the departure of the Turkish envoy to Egypt, the five ambassadors representing the Great

[1] Foreign Office Records: France. Soult to Bourquency, 6 August 1839.
[2] Ibid. Soult to Bourquency, 26 July 1839.

Powers presented the collective note in which they informed the Porte that agreement has been reached among the five Powers on the Eastern question, and requested him not to come to any final arrangement with Mohammed Ali without their concurrence.

The adhesion of the Russian Ambassador to this note was little expected, and came as a revelation to the Powers, especially to France, who suspected Russia of harbouring selfish aims against Turkey.

The collective note was communicated to Mohammed Ali by the consuls on August 6. It aroused his anger against Khosrew, whom he regarded as responsible for accepting the note. The note, he thought, had robbed the Sultan of his independence, and put Turkey under the benevolent protection of the Powers. It also robbed him of the chance of settling his differences with the Sultan directly. For, with a victorious army led by a trusted general like Ibrahim and with both fleets in his hands, he could have dictated his own terms of peace.

But Mohammed Ali let his chance slip from his hands. Had Ibrahim marched up to Constantinople and the Russians sailed down the Bosphorus as would have happened, the result could not have been in doubt. But Europe was spared a general conflagration. Mohammed Ali, in deference to the French Government, commanded Ibrahim to halt after Nezib. Russia, too, in order to clear her conscience towards the Powers, hastened to sign the collective note to the Porte.

The day on which the Powers assured the Sultan of a united front also marked the beginning of a strong divergence in the political views of the Powers. Henceforward Palmerston became the pivot on which the Eastern question turned. "My own opinion," he wrote to Granville, his ambassador in Paris, "is and has long been made up; it is that we ought to support the Sultan heartily and vigorously with France, if France will act with us; without her if she should decline."[1] When war actually broke out between Mohammed Ali and the Porte, Palmerston was determined on two things: that he would neither support Mohammed Ali's claims nor allow Russia to act alone. But when his apprehensions of Russia were relieved

[1] Foreign Office Records; France. Palmerston to Granville, June 1839.

by her signing the collective note, Palmerston turned his efforts to checking French pretensions by curbing Mohammed Ali's power.

In Palmerston's view, Mohammed Ali was a dangerous and a disintegrating element that must be removed if the Ottoman Empire were at all worth maintaining to check the Russian advance. Other people and France in particular might think what they liked about the Sick Man of Europe, his incurable ailments and his certain decease. They might imagine and invent solutions for the partition and the remodelling of his heritage. But Palmerston had a different view about the Sick Man and his empire. "Empires which had lasted long were extremely slow in falling. When people say that the Turkish Empire is rapidly falling to decay, one always replies: 'It will last our time if we try to prop it up and not to pull it down,' " wrote Palmerston.[1] In the House of Commons, when his policy was criticised by a certain Mr. Hume, the Member for Kilkenny, Palmerston declared that he saw no difference between the position of Mohammed Ali and that of a lord-lieutenant of Ireland trying to make himself a separate hereditary sovereign over Ireland and Scotland. He plainly told the House that he could not see "how the internal improvement of police in Egypt told either one way or the other on a great political question, namely whether it was for the interest of England or not to maintain the integrity of the Turkish Empire."[2] Mr. Hume's reply was to remind Palmerston of England's capture of Aden, and of Russia's large-scale spoliation of Turkish territory.

England of her own accord might declare the independence of the Spanish colonies in America, and might support and recognise the cause of independence in Greece and Belgium. But her liberal intentions went no further. She recoiled before the Russian scare and the French nightmare.

The French objection to Palmerston's proposal for wresting the Turkish fleet from Mohammed Ali, by employing coercive measures, marked the first split between the views of both governments. The second rock on which Anglo-French understanding struck was the territorial question. France wanted

[1] Foreign Office Records: France. Palmerston to Bulwer, 13 September 1838.

[2] *Hansard*, 27 March 1840.

to cede to Mohammed Ali the hereditary possession of all the dominions which he governed, with the possible exception of Arabia, Crete, and Adana in Asia Minor. Palmerston, on the other hand, was of opinion that with Syria in Mohammed Ali's hands no future peace between Sultan and Viceroy could ever be secured. Moreover, the possession of Syria would mean that Mohammed Ali would be left master of the two overland routes to the East—the Suez and the Euphrates. This would naturally mean French predominance on both routes, a position which Palmerston was intent on combating. Palmerston therefore communicated to France his conviction that the desert should intervene between Mohammed Ali and the Sultan, and that the former should "withdraw into his original shell of Egypt."[1]

When the split between England and France became imminent, Russia proceeded a step forward and sent a special envoy to England on 15 September 1839, to assure the British Government of Russia's concurrence with Palmerston's views that the hereditary possession of Egypt alone should be conferred on Mohammed Ali, who must be made to restore to the Sultan all other dominions under his control. The envoy added that the Czar was ready to enter into a treaty to enforce those measures upon the Pasha. And if the other Powers undertook military operations in Syria or Egypt, Russia was to be entrusted with the defence of the capital and of Asia Minor, if necessary.

Brunnow, the envoy, astonished Palmerston by stating that Russia was ready to revoke the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, and to acknowledge as a permanent principle that the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles should be closed to warships of all nations.[2]

Palmerston communicated this proposal to the Cabinet and to the French Government. Although both disapproved of the proposal, Palmerston on his own responsibility gave Brunnow to understand that he was anxious to proceed with Russia and without France, if she refused to join in the course of action suggested.[3]

Before parting with France, Palmerston made a last offer.

[1] Foreign Office Records: France. Palmerston to Bulwer, 1 September 1839.

[2] Ibid: Russia. Palmerston to Clanricarde, 25 October 1839.

[3] Ibid. Brunnow's Report. 8 October 1839.

He proposed to France that Mohammed Ali should be granted in addition to Egypt the hereditary possession of the pashalik of Acca, exclusive of the fortress, on condition that France would agree to check Mohammed Ali if he refused.[1] This was a most tempting offer. Yet France not only refused the proffered terms, but also protested against the idea of coercing Mohammed Ali: "Rather than submit to these terms, Mohammed Ali, who would see in them his ruin, would plunge into the chance of a resistance less dangerous to himself, but more embarrassing for Europe.

"We should decline driving him to this course, even though we felt absolutely certain that our refusal would be the signal for a close alliance between England and Russia."[2]

Nothing could have injured Egypt's cause more than this reply. Palmerston received it politely but with "freezing silence"; and in the name of the Council he solemnly withdrew the concession which he had just made.[3] Relations between the two governments became strained, and Russia hastened to send back her envoy to London, with the Czar's consent that a simultaneous admission of the Allied flags in the Straits in case of need was agreed upon.

Austria and Prussia sent likewise their representatives to London, and a convention between the Powers exclusive of France, was now possible.

In France the Anglo-Russian *rapprochement* stirred up public opinion against England. In the French Chamber Thiers, leader of the Opposition, cried that "France could not abandon Mohammed Ali without sacrificing her most cherished interests and her honour as a great power."[4] This sensational statement had its effect; the French Ministry resigned on 24 February 1840, and Thiers came to power with Guizot as Ambassador in London.

Thiers's triumph alarmed the Chancelleries of Europe. It became clear that he would never approve of a conference of the Powers to sit in judgment on Mohammed Ali. He was of opinion that if the Sultan spontaneously agreed to a settlement with the Pasha, the Powers ought not to interfere and

1 Guizot, *Memoires*, vol. iv. Sebastiani a Soult, 3 October 1839.

2 Foreign Office Records: France. Soult a Sebastiani, 14 October 1839.

3 Ibid. Sebastiani a Soult, 18 October 1839.

4 Debidour, *Histoire Diplomatique de l'Europe*, i, 374.

annul the Sultan's action. This was quite inconsistent with the collective note, but in his view it was the only way to secure favourable terms for the Pasha without the risk of a serious rupture with the Powers. For the furtherance of this solution, Thiers sent emissaries to both Constantinople and Alexandria to facilitate a mutual agreement that would nullify any decision of the proposed conference between the Powers. Nor was the Porte unwilling to listen to overtures of peace. The influence of Turkish notabilities had been constantly used in furtherance of Mohammed Ali's claims. Moreover Mohammed Ali, had lately reconciled himself with the Grand Vizier, and Ponsonby had to write to Palmerston that "there was a great disposition in the Porte to make an arrangement with Mohammed Ali."[1]

Fearing lest the settlement of affairs should pass out of his control, Palmerston decided on the bold step which was to unmask France before the whole world. A favourable moment suddenly presented itself.

A widespread insurrection in Syria and the Lebonon rose against Ibrahim, who in May 1840 tried to enforce a disarmament measure on all villages. The insurgents were incited to rise by emissaries with money and arms from Turkey and the British Embassy.

Palmerston found in the insurrection a strong argument to put forward to the Cabinet in favour of prompt action against Mohammed Ali. But Palmerston had the greatest difficulty in inducing his colleagues to adopt his views. There were two ministers, Clarendon and Holland, who strongly opposed the conclusion of any treaty to which France would not be a party. Melbourne, the Prime Minister, was very anxious to keep the Cabinet intact and to avoid any excuse for resignation. The resignation of Palmerston would be disastrous to the Government; for though Melbourne might be all-in-all in Buckingham Palace, Palmerston was all-powerful in Downing Street. At the same time, the line of policy which he was about to follow was extremely prejudicial to the ideals of the extreme Liberals, who naturally regarded a union with the despotic Powers against liberal France as a betrayal of the doctrines of their party.

[1] Foreign Office Records: Turkey. Ponsonby to Palmerston, 1 October 1839.

Palmerston threatened to resign if the convention was not passed by the Cabinet. In a letter to Melbourne, dated 5 July 1840, Palmerston said that the difference of opinion which seemed to exist between himself and some members of the Cabinet about the Turkish question, and the extreme importance which he attached to this question had led him, after full consideration, to place his office at the disposal of the Prime Minister :

> My opinion upon this question is distinct and unqualified. If we draw back and shrink from a co-operation with Austria, Russia and Prussia in this matter, because France stands aloof and will not join, we shall place this country in the degraded position of being held in leading strings by France. . . . I do not know," continued Palmerston, "that I ever had a stronger conviction upon any matter of equal importance, and I am sure that if my judgment is wrong on this matter, it can be of little value upon any other.[1]

The Cabinet, to save its own political skin, was cowed into submission, but not without the dissenting ministers protesting. In their appended note to the Queen, Holland and Clarendon said :

> Your Majesty is therein advised to accede to a treaty which has for its object the expulsion of Mohammed Ali from Syria. Such interference seems to Lord Clarendon and to Lord Holland to be questionable in policy, and neither necessary to the honour of Your Majesty's crown, nor directly or obviously advantageous to Your Majesty's subjects.[2]

On 15 July 1840 the Convention of London was entered into by the Four Powers on the one hand and the Porte on the other. By this convention the Powers undertook actively to assist the Sultan to reduce Mohammed Ali to submission. In a separate act, the terms which the Sultan had to propose to Mohammed Ali were stated: the hereditary tenure of Egypt, with the governorship for life of the pashalik of Acca. If he did not accede to the terms within ten days, the offer of

[1] Bulwer, *Life of Palmerston*, vol. ii, Palmerston to Melbourne, 5 July 1840.

[2] Maxwell, *Life of Clarendon*, ii, 196, 8 July 1840.

Acca would be withdrawn. If, after ten days more, he refused to submit, the Sultan would be free to adopt any course, as his own interests and the counsels of his allies might suggest to him.

In a third document, known as the Reserved Protocol, it was laid down that "the state of affairs in Syria, the interests of humanity and grave considerations of European policy made it urgent that the Powers should begin active operations without delay and without waiting for the ratification of the Convention."

When the terms of the treaty became known, the whole French nation thundered and blustered at the mortal affront hurled at its "national honour." Europe was once more intriguing by treaties against France. France had been rudely thrown out of the Concert of Europe, and an essentially European affair was to be solved not only without France, but also against her. Louis Philippe, king of the French, threatened "to put the red cap on and to let loose the tiger" which he had chained for ten years.[1]

In truth the French were taken by surprise, and they were absolutely at a loss as to what course they should take. Could they, after signing the collective note of 1839, support Mohammed Ali by taking up arms in his favour ? Were they ready for a general European war ? Could Mohammed Ali hold out against the Allied Powers until France was ready ? Louis Philippe called round him Thiers, Guizot and the principal officers to confer on the situation. They came to the conclusion that emissaries should be sent to Mohammed Ali to keep up his spirits and to supervise his defences. At the same time preparations for war should seriously be taken in hand.[2]

Thiers was evidently bent on war if the coalition did not break. As was divulged later on when he was out of office, his intention was not only to support Mohammed Ali's claims but to force a rectification of the treaties of 1815.[3]

But Palmerston was not to be intimidated by the bellicose intentions of the French Government. "France will not go to war," he wrote to Hodges, "with the other Great Powers of

[1] Debidour, *Histoire Diplomatique de l'Europe*, i, 381.

[2] Guizot, *Me'moires*, v, 265.

[3] Foreign Office Records: France. Granville to Palmerston, 22 November 1840.

Europe in order to help Mohammed Ali; nor has she the means of doing so."[1]

The success of Palmerston's policy wholly depended on subduing Mohammed Ali as soon as possible. Once Mohammed Ali was beaten, the French would at once see the futility of their policy and the crisis would come to an end. Prompt action was therefore necessary. While negotiations with Mohammed Ali were proceeding, orders were given to the British fleet to act at once by cutting off the communications between Syria and Egypt.

When Mohammed Ali heard of the European coalition against him, he prepared himself for the worst. National guards were created in the towns under the headship of notables. Workers, artisans and students were mobilised and trained. Defences were raised along the coast from Rosetta to Alexandria, and the two naval squadrons, the Egyptian and Turkish, were amalgamated under one Egyptian commander. The Egyptian garrisons in Arabia were ordered to proceed to Egypt, and reinforcements were sent to Syria.

His tone and general attitude towards the Consuls-General of the Allied Powers became haughty.

On 11 August 1840 the Turkish envoy entrusted to convey to Mohammed Ali the terms of the convention arrived; and on the 17th the envoy and the Allied Consuls-General formally announced the treaty to the Viceroy. His reception of the terms was cold and defiant. He told them plainly that he could not accept its terms. "You know too well the character of Mohammed Ali to suppose that he will allow himself to be buried alive. . . . I will never submit to conditions which are dishonourable to me."[2]

He was deeply wounded at the manner in which the convention was worded, especially with regard to the ten days' grace. Mohammed Ali's line of action against the Allies was decided upon. He thought that his position in Egypt was impregnable, and that, whatever happened, France was at hand to mediate. As a matter of fact, on the day following the

[1] Foreign Office Records: Turkey (Egypt). Palmerston to Hodges, 18 July 1840.

[2] Ibid. Hodges to Palmerston, 19 August 1840.

Turkish envoy's arrival, Count Walewski, a natural son of Napoleon, landed at Alexandria to deliver France's message to the old man who was playing the part of Napoleon defying all the Powers.

His mission, as he said, was not to dissuade Mohammed Ali from accepting the Treaty . . . . . He was directed to inform the Pasha that France had decided to adopt an armed neutrality awaiting the further progress of events.[1]

The French Consul-General declared to Mohammed Ali that such was the force of public opinion in France that he hardly hoped that war could be averted. The European residents, who were naturally concerned with their own personal interests, openly criticised the Allies for adopting coercive measures against Egypt, "and" said the British Agent, "no portion of those inhabitants was more loud and violent in strictures on her Majesty's Government and even on myself than the body of the British merchants residing in Alexandria."[2]

On August 25 Mohammed Ali gave the Turkish Envoy and the Consuls to understand that it was useless coming to him after the expiration of more days, for they would have the same answer. He frankly told them that after the expiration of the stipulated time, they had better take measures for their departure; for if war began he could no longer trust them, and it would be to their honour and his personal safety that they should go.[3]

Yet on the last of the days of grace, on September 5, the Consuls and the Turkish Envoy repaired to Mohammed Ali to hear his last word. He told them that he had decided to accept the second term of the convention, namely the hereditary possession of Egypt. With regard to Syria, he said, he was going to make a most humble prayer for it from the Sultan.

The Consuls, who represented the terms of the convention as one indivisible whole, formally declined his proposals and made known to him that coercive measures would take their

1 Foreign Office Records: Turkey (Egypt). Hodges to Palmerston, 19 August 1840.

2 *Ibid.* Hodges to Palmerston, 23 August 1840.

3 *Ibid.* Hodges to Palmerston, 25 August 1840.

course. "Well, then, let hostilities continue," replied the Pasha, "but send my proposals to Constantinople or to London." The Consuls would not comply with Mohammed Ali's request unless he restored the Turkish fleet, and gave them a guarantee of good faith. The old man was infuriated and dismissed the Consuls.[1]

Mohammed Ali could only be made to submit by force of arms, and England, with Austria to a very small extent, had to bear the brunt of the fight. The British Ambassador at Constantinople counselled the Porte, on his own responsibility, to depose Mohammed Ali after having rejected the terms offered him.

"To continue Mohammed Ali in his government," said Ponsonby, "is to make proclamation that the Sultan and his Allies are afraid of Mohammed Ali and it will uphold Mohammed Ali's most dangerous arm, namely the prestige of his power. It has been loudly stated here that Mohammed Ali treats the Allies with mockery; that he laughs at them."[2]

The way was now clear for action. On August 14 the Allied squadron consisting of twelve ships of the line had taken a position off the Syrian coast. Commodore Napier acting according to his orders, issued his proclamation: "Inhabitants of the Lebanon! I call upon you to rise and throw off the yoke under which you are groaning."[3]

Hostilities began towards the middle of September. The sea supremacy of the Allies told heavily against Ibrahim. His line of communication with Egypt by sea was cut and Beyrout was forcibly evacuated. A Turco-European force consisting of 3,500 Turks, 1,500 English marines and 100 Austrians went on shore to co-operate with the fleet. Haifa and Tyre also fell, to be followed on November 3 by the fall of the strong fortress of Acca. Acca was bravely defended by its Egyptian garrison, and but for the mysterious explosion in the magazines, the fortress would have resisted for a long time.[4]

The sudden fall of Acca lowered Mohammed Ali's prestige. With the Allied fleet dominating the sea, he could not possibly

1 Foreign Office Records: Turkey (Egypt). Interview with Mohammed Ali, 5 September 1840.

2 Turkey. Ponsonby to Palmerston, 10 September 1840.

3 Napier, *War in Syria*, *i*, 37. 4 *Ibid.* 225.

maintain his hold on the coast. But his dominion in the hinterland, where he still had an army of at least 60,000 men under Ibrahim and Suleiman, was not seriously affected. For though his men were harassed and outflanked by the armed mountaineers, they were still in possession of Damascus, Aleppo, Jerusalem and Gaza. All that the Allies could do in this situation was to blockade the Egyptian ports and maintain their hold on the Syrian coast.

When the news reached France that the Sultan had deposed Mohammed Ali, and that a Turco-European landing had been made on the Syrian coasts, the French were thunderstruck. The moment, they thought, had come for a forceful intervention in support of their ally. "The state of things," wrote the English Ambassador in Paris, "has an appearance very menacing to the internal tranquillity of the country and to the general peace of the world ...... No French government could refrain from resisting the expulsion of Mohammed Ali from Egypt."[1]

Then came a masterful advocation of Mohammed Ali's political existence from Theirs in a note to his ambassador in London. "The Viceroy of Egypt, from the provinces which he governs, from the seas over which his influence extends, is necessary to secure the proportions actually existing between the different states of the world."[2]

Palmerston was therefore obliged to instruct Ponsonby to state to the Porte, in conjunction with the Allied ambassadors, that in pursuance of the "Separate Act," the Powers strongly recommend to the Sultan that Mohammed Ali should be reinstated in Egypt with hereditary powers if he should restore the Turkish fleet and evacuate the rest of the Turkish dominions under his government. Mohammed Ali should be notified of this by the Sultan, and both the Ambassador and commander-in-chief were instructed to afford every facility.[3]

But for the moment it was towards France that the eyes of Europe were turned. Instead of the tiger of revolution being unmuzzled, the world suddenly saw a farce. Louis Philippe wanted peace at any price ; for an attempt on his life was made

1 Foreign Office Records: France. Granville to Palmerston, 5 October 1840.

2 *Ibid.* Theirs to Guizot, 8 October 1840.

3 *Ibid.* Turkey, Palmerston to Ponsonby, 15 October 1840.

by a revolutionary on 15 October 1840, and Palmerston was as vindictive as ever:

"Tell the King," wrote Palmerston, "that if France throws the gauntlet, we shall not refuse to pick it up, and that if she begins a war, she will to a certainty lose her ships, colonies and commerce, and that Mohammed Ali will just be checked into the Nile."[1] Thiers had therefore to resign and Guizot, a moderate statesman, came to power with Marechal Soult as head of the Government. The retirement of Thiers was a pledge to the world that France was not going to make war in defence of Mohammed Ali.

Meanwhile the English admiral, Commodore Napier, anchoring before Alexandria with six ships, undertook, on his responsibility, the task of opening direct communications with the Viceroy. With admirable insight, the commodore saw the difficulty of driving Ibrahim from Syria and the injustice of coercing Mohammed Ali in favour of the Turk.

Napier was a radical who had been in communication with the anti-war party in the Cabinet. He knew of Palmerston's note to Ponsonby about the reinstatement of Mohammed Ali in Egypt with hereditary rights, and taking that as his text, he sent to Mohammed Ali for an interview. It was granted, and a convention dated 28 November 1840, between himself and Boghos Bey, Mohammed Ali's Minister, was agreed upon by both sides. By it Mohammed Ali promised to give up the Turkish fleet and to order Ibrahim to retreat from Syria; in return for which Napier pledged his word that the Powers would guarantee the hereditary possession of Egypt to Mohammed Ali, the non-bombardment of any port of Egypt, and the security of communications between Egypt and Syria. In his letter to Palmerston dated November 20, Napier said "I have done what I think will meet the requirements of the government. I know the responsibility I incur. But an officer ought not to be afraid of acting without instructions, when it is for the advantage of his country."[2]

Unfortunately this convention was annulled and protested against by the Commander-in-Chief, the Ambassador and the Porte. But the all-powerful Palmerston approved of it. Even

1 Bulwer, *Life of Palmerston*, vol. ii, Palmerston to Bulwer, 22 September 1840.
2 Napier, *War in Syria*, vol. i. Napier to Palmerston, 26 November 1840.

before the news of Napier's convention reached him, he had sent instructions to the Commander-in-Chief to proceed on just the same lines as those followed by Napier. Thus at last Palmerston was obliged to ronounce his former mistaken view of the inexpediency of negotiating with Mohammed Ali. Had the Powers adopted that line from the beginning of the crisis, the question of Egypt would have been settled long before without restore to arms.

On 8 December 1840 Captain Fanshawe, on behalf of the Admiral commanding the Allied forces in the Mediterranean, landed at Alexandria and informed the Egyptian Government of the determination of the Powers to make known their intentions to Mohammed Ali. The Viceroy acquiesced in the course suggested by the Envoy, and sent a loyal letter to the Grand Vazier in which he expressed his submission to the Sultan.

Then came the problem of the fireman to be sent by the Sultan to Mohammed Ali. The Porte, incited by Ponsonby, was elated by recent successes, and tried to ignore the hereditary right granted to Mohammed Ali according to the treaty of July 15: "How could the Four Powers," wrote Reschid Pasha, the Grand Vazier, to his envoy in London, "henceforth reconcile the 'hereditary grant' with the maintenance of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire?"

These underhand machinations aroused the anger of the Allies, who wanted to settle the affairs by the acceptance of the firman by Mohammed Ali. Their representatives protested to the Porte, and the firman was ready on 13 February 1841. The firman, while confirming Mohammed Ali in the hereditary possession of Egypt, contained some absurd restrictions such as the right of the Sultan to nominate any member from the Viceroy's family as successor, and the acquisition of one-fourth of the revenue of Egypt as tribute.

Mohammed Ali refused to accept it as it was. He was confident that the Sultan would not consider it worthy of himself that "while the Creator of the world exempts mankind from harsh conditions, the Padishahs [sultans], who are endowed with divine qualities, should attach to their benefits conditions which cannot be executed."[1]

1 Foreign Office Records: Turkey. Mohammed Ali to the Grand Vizier, March 1841.

Ponsonby and the Porte thought the refusal of the Pasha was scarcely compatible with the character of a subject. Ponsonby told them that it was impossible for the Sublime Porte to negotiate with Mohammed Ali without infringing the principle of sovereignty in the Sultan.[1]

Metternich, seeing no end to that question, wrote to Constantinople that if the Porte did not adopt the modifications to the firman, the Emperor of Austria would withdraw altogether from the Alliance. Prussia and Russia expressed similar views. Palmerston could not help but comply with the wishes of his Allies. He wrote a severe letters to Ponsonby, with the result that a modified copy of the firman was drawn up answering Mohammed Ali's demands. The question of succession was settled according to the principle of seniority then followed in Turkey. The annual tribute was fixed at 80,000 purses (£T.400,000). With regard to grades, the Viceroy was to nominate and promote up to the grade of Brigadier.

On 22 May 1841 the new firman was approved by the Ambassadors, and on the 10th it was officially read in Mohammed Ali's court amid much rejoicings. Here is the text of the Ambassadors' note:

> Nous soussingnés, Représentants des Quatre puissances Alliées de la Sublime Porte déclarons, à sa demande expresse, qu'ayant pris connaissance de nouveau du project du firman d'investiture à envoyer au Pacha d'Egypte, Mehemet Ali Pasha, nous n'y avons rien trouvé qui nous ait paru devoir donner lieu bien à une objection quelconque de notre part, et qu'il ne nous reste plus, en conséquence, rien à lui demander . . . . . qu'elle passe parvenir ce firman à son adresse le plus promptement possible.

(*Signe*) STURMER (Austria)
PONSONBY (Britain)
KOENIGSMARK (Prussia)
22 Mai 1841 TITOW (Russia)

Thus Mohammed Ali was able to establish his dynasty on the throne of Egypt on his own term. He came out of the conflict a subdued hero. He lost the battle because he had pinned his faith on France, a fickle nation who fed him with

1 Foreign Office Records : Turkey. Ponsonby to Rechid, 18 March 1841.

big words but held back in action. Nevertheless he achieved his life's ambition—a throne for himself and his descendants.

Here is London's tribute to Mohammed Ali as expressed in French in the *Journal des Debats*, 3 June 1841 :

A Son Altesse le Pacha d'Egypte

Nous soussignés, négociants, banquiers et autres de la ville de Londres désirons de transmettre à Votre Altesse l'expression de notre reconnaissance et de nos remerciments sincères pour la complète protection que vous avez digné accorder à tous ceux de nos compatriotes qui demeuraient dans votre empire pendant la période passée, remplie de tant d'évènements et qui leur a permis de continuer chez eux leurs affaires sans le moindere préjudice.

Nous désirons également présenter à Votre Altesse les mêmes sentiments de reconnaissance et nos remerciments pour la libéralité qui aurait fait naître des sentiments bien contraires dans des esprits d'une trempe inférieure; vous avez permis le libre passage des malles et passagers à travers votre vaste empire, avec l' avantage de la même sécruité et de la même protection.

Votre Altesse peut s'assurer que cet exemple si méritoirement établi n'a pas échappé à l'admiration de toutes les nations, et pendant que nous désirons sincèrement présenter à Votre Altesse l'expression de notre reconnaissance et de notre admiration, nous espérons que la conduite que Votre Altesse a dignement tenue servira de modèle à d'autres souverains lorsqu'ils se trouveront placés dans des circonstances également difficiles.

Que Votre Altesse puisse encore continue longtemps à exercer une souveraineté bien faisante sur l'empire qui lui est confié en y développant des énergies commerciales qui étendront la prosp'érité et la civilisation d'un pays que vous léquirez paisiblement à votre successeur. C'est notre espèrance et notre prière fervente.

(*Signe*) A. A. Gower, Nephew et cie
Briggs, Thenbum
Ahrman et cie
Baring Freres

(*Suivent deux cents autres signatures des premieres maisons de Londres*)

Mohammed Ali's own words to Dr. Bowring are the best comment on the value of the man's work:

"Your country, England, has reached its present eminence by the labours of many generations; and no country can be made suddenly great and flourishing. Now I have done something for Egypt, I have begun to improve her; and she may be compared in some respects not only with Eastern, but with European countries. I have much to learn, and so have my people; and I am now sending Edhem Bey with fifteen young men to learn what your country can teach. They must see with their own eyes. Thay must learn to work with their own hands, they must examine your manufactures, they must try to discover how and why you are superior to us; and when they have been among your people a sufficient time, they must come home and instruct my people."[1]

1 Bowring's Report. Parliamentary Papers, vol. xxi, 1840.

Chapter VI

STILLNESS AFTER THE STORM

WITH the settlement of the diplomatic crisis in 1841 Mohammed Ali's political activity ended.

The main aims of the head of state seemed to have been realised by the settlement of peace between himself and the Sultan, and by the grant of the hereditary possession of Egypt. It gratified him more that the settlement was sponsored and sanctioned by the Powers of Europe. Any infringement in future of the terms of the Treaty of 1840 by the Port or by any of the Powers would be resisted by the Concert of the Powers. It was for this reason that things in Egypt after 1841 took a different shape from what they had had in the early years of Mohammed Ali. The army lost its *raison d'être*, and consequently most of the reforms that were initiated to support the army suffered. In education, in medicine, in industry and in engineering, the country was at a standstill. And more than this, a number of the establishments that had flourished in the past fifteen years now closed down, and some of the material and machinery used in them rotted for sheer lack of will-power to utilise them.

The country seemed to have spent all its effort in the tense years that preceded the war, and now that the wars were over everyone and everything seemed to relax.

It was during this interval that both Mohammed Ali and Ibrahim, in order to repair their broken health, and to see the world outside Egypt, started on their round of European visits—Mohammed Ali to Istanbul and Ibrahim to Paris and London.

Royal receptions were reserved for both great men. Mohammed Ali's visit to Constantinople was in the summer of 1846. He at once won the Sultan's favour, was presented by the Sultan himself to the Walida Sultana, the Sultan's mother, and "enjoyed the unprecedented honour of dining alone with the Sultan."

Accompanied by the Grand Vizier he visited the tomb of his rival, Sultan Mahmud, and arranged to visit Cavalla, his own birthplace, where an institution was to be opened in memory of his extraordinary elevation.

When he came back to Egypt, people saw that he had abandoned his former oriental attire: like the Sultan, he had a tarboosh on his head instead of a turban, and he now wore the full uniform of his rank as Grand Vizier, a blue frock-coat charged with gold embroidery. Upon his breast he wore several large decorations in brilliants, amongst which the portrait of the Sultan was conspicuous, together with a diamond ring of great splendour, the personal gift of His Imperial Majesty.[1]

Ibrahim's visit to Europe in the summer of 1846 was more resplendent, and afforded both the French and English a unique opportunity of fêting the victor of Missolonghi, Konieh and Nezib. In France, a review of 15,000 soldiers was held at Vincennes in honour of Ibrahim, and the immense crowds gave the famous general a splendid ovation. The word "Nezib" more than once penetrated his ears. Ibrahim was much affected by the distinguished reception. Suleiman Pasha, who accompanied Ibrahim, could not help bursting into tears.

In London, Lord Aberdeen, the Foreign Secretary, placed Minart's state apartment at the disposal of the Pasha. This was where the King of the Netherlands and the Archdukes of Russia and Austria put up when they visited England.

On July 4 a banquet in his honour was given at the Reform Club. One of the decorations prepared for the occasion was a pyramid with drawings of Mohammed Ali and Ibrahim. Amongst the celebrities present were Palmerston, Napier and Bowring. The toast of Ibrahim was received with great cheering: "Ibrahim Pasha, the eldest son of our eldest ally, Mohammed Ali!" Most interesting of all was Palmerston's speech, when he rose to propose the health of Mohammed Ali and the prosperity of Egypt. He said that Mohammed Ali was truly a great reformer and a great agriculturist in Egypt. He was a man most remarkable in the age in which he lived. By the

1 Foreign Office Records: Turkey (Egypt). Stoddart to Palmerston, 8 August 1846.

force of his own genius and the strength of his own character, by his enterprise, his preservance and his sagacity, he had raised himself to the post of the highest eminence, and had diffused civilisation and established order in a country which he had found immersed in darkness and influenced by prejudice. "I propose this toast," said Palmerston, "with the greater pleasure, because as a minister of a late administration, I have been called upon, in performance of my duty as a servant of the Crown and as a minister—following what I and my colleagues believed to be our public duty, in the maintenance of the balance of powers in Europe, and in the maintence of the public peace, taking a long view of things—to take steps which might appear hostile to Mohammed Ali.

"I am glad to say that the conduct of Mohammed Ali did great honour to him—the conduct of the most generous foe. I trust that we shall now have him as the faithful ally of our interests as he has been our most generous opponent. Health and long life to Mohammed Ali and continued prosperity to Egypt!"

When Ibrahim left England on 18 July 1846, a salute of nineteen guns was fired from the *Victory* at Portsmouth, with the Egyptian standard hoisted at the forepeak. Ibrahim made a donation of £ 500 for the poor of London.[1]

Mohammed Ali himself was planning to visit Paris and London, but his health and the news of the outbreak of the revolutions of 1848 prevented him from going. His mental health was such that a regency council was formed under the presidency of his son Ibrahim, but the actual reins of government were in the hands of his grandson Abbas. And although Ibrahim was officially invested with the firman of office in October 1848, his health gave way rapidly and he died on 10 November 1848. Mohammed Ali, tormented by illness and by the irreparable loss of his son, died at Alexandria on 2 August 1849. The sad news was thus communicated by the British Agent to his Government:

My Lord,

I have the honour to inform Your Lordship that the grave has just closed over the mortal remains of the old Pasha

1 Foreign Office Records: Turkey (Egypt). July 1846.

Mohammed Ali. He died about midday on the 2nd instant at Alexandria, aged eighty.

His funeral at Alexandria was followed by all the chief Egyptian officers, the consular body, and all principal merchants and inhabitants.

At Bulak it was met by all the surviving members of the family with the exception of Abbas, and they walked in funeral procession to the tomb chosen by the late Pasha for his place of rest in the new mosque which he built in the Citadel.

The ceremonial of the funeral was a most meagre affair. In short, a general impression prevails that Abbas Pasha has shown a culpable lack of respect for the memory of his illustrious grandfather.

The attachment and veneration of all classes in Egypt for the name of Mohammed Ali are prouder obsequies than any which it was in the power of his successor to confer.

In common with many, I fear, with most of those upon whom the world has conferred the title "The Great," he carried his love of fame and power to an extreme, but his ambition was untarnished by avarice, and his resentments were hot, but they speedily passed away . . . .

Very rarely would it be that Your Lordship would hear in any part of the Turkish Empire such a phrase as the following: "If Allah would permit me, gladly would I give ten years of my life to add them to that of our old pasha." Yet this I have known to fall from the lips of more than one during the last illness of Mohammed Ali.[1]

When we think of the gigantic task that lay before Mohammed Ali of regenerating Egypt, then a forlorn nation and a dead land; and of the incredible ignorance and indolence that surrounded him; and when we consider the superb success he achieved both in war and in peace: the durable elements of progress which he bequeathed to the Egypt of the future, the high and unparalleled part which he played in the general policy of Europe; we may safely say that Mohammed Ali was by far the highest administrative genius that the East had known since the days of the First Caliphs.

1 Foreign Office Records: Turkey (Egypt). Murray to Aberdeen, 5 August 1849.

During the controversy that ensued in 1840 between England and France on the subject of Mohammed Ali, Palmerston said in one of his despatches that "to frame a system of future policy in the East upon the accidental position of a man turned seventy would be to build on sand, and no man can tell what will come when Mohammed Ali goes."[1]

Fortunately for Egypt, Palmerston's fear were not justified, and Mohammed Ali's successors on the whole, though not pretending to the master's genius, were true scions of the great man from whom they inherited a new motherland, a marked administrative ability, and, on the whole, a sincere attachment to progress, enlightenment and order. Nor was Mohammed *Ali* ever forgetful of the fact that the maintenance of much of what he had achieved for Egypt depended to a great degree on the character of his successors. For this reason he fought hard for a direct line of succession, and for this reason too he gave his children and grandsons the best education available at the time.

There is preserved in the British Museum a significant manuscript written by Jeremy Bentham, the famous exponent of radical philosophy, and addressed in French to Mohammed Ali. The careful thought which Mohammed Ali gave to educating Abbas, his grandson and successor, after Ibrahim, can best be understood by perusing this interesting document. In it Bentham lays down the rules for an elaborate and a comprehensive scheme for bringing up the heir-apparent on thorough constitutional lines. "Sans une constitution, et une constitution simple." writes Bentham, "point de permanence pour riyn de ce que vous auriez fait; sans l'indépendance point de constitution; sans un successeur capable et disposé d'entretenir cette constitution, quelle que soit la constitution, et tout ce que vous auriez fait disparaitrent avec vous."[2]

Abbas, however, was not destined to benefit by such a scheme. He was brought up on the old established lines. And though he had won valuable experience in both military and political matters by serving under his uncle Ibrahim in Syria, and by acting as the governor of Cairo for some time, yet he remained to the last a selfish, sullen and severe master, incap-

1 Bulwer, *Life of Palmerston*, vol. ii. Palmerston to Bulwer, 22 September, 1838.

2 Jeremy Bentham, MS. dated 28 April 1828.

able of adapting himself to the new state of affairs created by his grandfather. He had contracted from an early date an implacable hatred for foreigners and foreign ideas, and only waited for a propitious moment to wreak vengeance on the work of Western civilisation. That moment came with his accession to the throne on 5 December 1848.

It is extremely painful to record the reversal by Abbas of much of his grandfather's inspiring work. During his reign schools were shut, academic institutions abolished, factories abandoned with the engines and other expensive material left to rot in a world of heat and dust. The units of the fleet were dismantled and exposed for sale to foreign countries. High functionaries of state left the Government and found refuge in Constantinople. Many Europeans, and particularly Frenchmen, were dismissed from the Government service, thus provoking a most determined hostility on the part of France. Members of the ruling family became disaffected and an opposition party was formed, headed by Said and Ismail, who sent complaints to Constantinople.[1]

This reign of gloom and rampant caprice was not without one or two redeeming features. It was comparatively a happy time for the fellaheen. Apart from the injustice of forcing them to give up portions of their lands to add to the estates of the Viceroy's son, El Hami, the fellaheen had very little to complain of. The absence of a large army made conscription unnecessary, *corvee* work stopped of itself, there being no public works such as canals or bridges to attend to. The curtailment of expenditure that resulted from this negative policy permitted a curtailment of taxes and the elimination of the obnoxious system of monopolies. Abbas's reign was, therefore, not as bad as it was generally represented by Europeans, to whom Abbas usually displayed a cold and a haughty demeanour.

During these years the British Agent, Colonel Murray, swayed the counsels of the Viceroy who had alienated France. One result of Murray's influence was that Abbas opposed the French scheme of connecting the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea by a maritime canal, and instead constructed in 1854

1 Foreign Office Records: Turkey (Egypt). Colonel Murray's despatches, February 1849.

between Alexandria and Cairo the first railway line laid in the East.

It is interesting to note that Stephenson, a son of the famous inventor, was in charge together with several Egyptian engineers of constructing the first railway.

To encourage the overland route as opposed to the canal, Abbas repaired the road between Cairo and Suez, thus preparing for the second railway line between Cairo and Suez.

Abbas was mysteriously killed in July 1858 in his isolated palace at Benha, by some of his Mamelukes who conspired against him. When, early in the morning, the two pashas in attendance saw the horrible crime, they kept it a secret and carried the corpse with them in a closed cab to the palace at Helmieh near the Citadel. Then the news was announced and Said, son of Mohammed Ali, was proclaimed Pasha of Egypt.

Abbas's successor and uncle, Said, was born to be a most popular sovereign. Under the able tuition of Monsieur Koening, an accomplished Frenchman, Said received a through European education, which enabled him later on to appreciate the work of foreigners and reverse the policy pursued by his predecessor. But though enlightened and desirous of completing the work begun by his father for Egypt, Said's nature precluded him from pursuing any line of active policy. He was jolly and easy-going, lamentably lacking in will-power and in capable of deep thinking.

In particular, his weakness for foreign company drew into the court charlatans and needy adventures whose business it was to make money by fair means or foul. Supported by their consuls and taking their stand by the notorious capitulations, these reckless foreigners were capable of much mischief, and were later partly responsible for the financial ruin of the country.

Said's intimacy with one great foreigner, Ferdinand de Lesseps, gave birth to a project of far-reaching consequences both to Egypt and the world—the Suez Canal.

But the concession made to De Lesseps was a most costly one. In order to meet its obligations to the Maritime Canal Company the Government had to increase taxes, to levy new

ones, and to take the fellaheen from their fields and send them to the bottom of the new "ditch."

Then there was the army, of which Said was greatly enamoured. It was a hobby to him, a plaything, an expensive game. He liked to be with his troops, to clothe them in silk and gold, to camp with them, to drill them, and to lead them in manœuvres and imaginary battles. In his reign military service was reduced to one year. As a result, it became very popular both to the sons of notables and the sons of the poor, who felt they were sharing the pride of comradeship in arms under their benevolent prince.

For the sake of the army Said closed all schools that did not contribute directly to its maintenance. The School of Medicine was temporarily closed, likewise the School of Languages and many others. But the Military School and the Engineering School were transferred to the Barrages, a strategic spot chosen by the popular viceroy to be the base for his operations and activities. There he built the famous Barrages Citadel with strong ramparts and towers commanding the route to Cairo. Yet with the exception of the force that took part in the Crimean War on the side of Turkey, the army was never actively engaged.

But this is not all, for in the time of Said some real material progress was made. The mileage of railways was increased ; the line between Cairo and Suez was constructed in 1858. The International Commission for reporting on the proposed project of the Suez Canal was asked by the Viceroy to examine the Barrages and to make suggestions concerning the irrigation system of the country. The Sudan too, neglected and used only as a convict station by Abbas, occupied for some time the serious attention of the Viceroy, who himself visited the country in January 1857, restored order there, lowered taxation, and made radical changes in its administration which gave the Sudanese a share in the government of the country by nominating them Mamours or governors of small districts.

In Said's reign too the fellaheen, who had hitherto held their plots of land by usufruct, were definitely recognised by the decree of A.H. 1247 (1858) as owners of their land, with full rights of selling, bequeathing, letting and mortgaging it. This decree established landed property, legalised the private

ownership of land in Egypt, and gave the fellah an economic individuality he had never had before. The new status of the fellah gave an impetus to agriculture ; the cultivation of cotton in particular received a strong stimulus, for the fellaheen, seeing the profits that accrued from it, emulated each other in its production, and thus the way was prepared for the great agricultural development of the following years.

Towards the end of his reign this bright and jovial monarch was tormented by sickness and mortified by the frauds of his entourage. He died in January 1860, and was succeeded by his nephew Ismail, son of the great Ibrahim.

Thus did Egypt pass the fifteen uneventful years of the two reigns that succeeded Mohammed Ali. It played no part worthy of attracting the eyes of the civilised world. The Egypt of Mohammed Ali, which had riveted the attention of the world for a generation and had become a member of the body politic of the nations, once more assumed an almost stationary position and was slowly going to sleep again when Ismail appeared on the scene.

CHAPTER VII

ISMAIL THE MAGNIFICENT

ON 14 May 1858, Said was celebrating little Bairam at Alexandria, and members of the Khedivial Family came there to pay their respects and congratulations to him. Among the princes were Ahmed, the heir-apparent, who was Ibrahim's son and Ismail's elder brother, and Ahmed's uncle, Abdul Halim.

The feast passed smoothly and a special train was ordered to convey the princes and their suites to Cairo. At Kafr-el-Zayyat, however, a railway disaster took place. At that time the bridge across the Nile branch was not yet completed, and the carriages had to be taken across the river by means of a steam ferry. Unfortunately the wheels of Ahmed's carriage had been left unchained, with the tragic consequence that the train missed the ferry and plunged into the river. Prince Ahmed, the heir-apparent, who was corpulent and clumsy, soon drowned ; the more nimble prince Abdul Halim, after failing to rescue his nephew, managed to swim ashore, and thus brought himself a step nearer the throne. But the tragedy had a more direct effect on the destinies of Egypt. Prince Ahmed, an intelligent agriculturalist, wealthy and avaricious, had passed away and left Prince Ismail, his brother, as heir-apparent to the Viceroyalty.

Ismail, who was born in 1830, was then a young man of liberal and progressive ideas. After finishing his education in Egypt, he had been sent by his grandfather to Vienna and to France as a member of the scholastic mission of 1844, together with his brother Mustapha Fadel and his uncle Abdul Halim.

In France he studied at the Military College of St. Cyr and received there an all-round education. When he came back to Egypt his father's health was deteriorating, and his cousin Abbas came to power. The eccentricities of Abbas made Ismail a leader of the princes' opposition against him.

To avoid trouble with the Viceroy, Ismail had to leave the country and settle for some time in Istunbul. When said succeeded Abbas in 1854, Ismail came back to Egypt, and his relations with the Viceroy were from the outset very friendly. He was called upon by his uncle to preside over the High Council of Justice, and was sent to Europe on more than one mission to its courts. In 1854, while on his way to France to negotiate for a seat for Egypt at the Peace Conference of Paris after the conclusion of the Crimean War, he paid a visit to the Vatican, where he was received by Pope Pius IX. Moreover, he acted as regent during Said's visits to Arabia and to Europe.

In all these duties, Ismail acquitted himself most ably. Ismail had combined in himself the experience of an enterprising business man together with a natural aptitude for organisation and reform. He was, besides, a thrifty painstaking landlord, whole-heartedly devoted to the interests of his own lands. His intelligence and *savoir-faire* were evident in his masterly grasp of the details of nearly everything that came under his notice, in his brilliant interviews and conversations with a multifarious succession of visitors, and in the great constructive works which he thought out and accomplished. His charm of manner was, however, his best asset, and his power of fascination was most extraordinary. "I have never met a man," says Moberly Bell, " who failed for the moment to succumb to it. Be his interlocutor an engineer, a soldier, a doctor or a crack sportsman, he was sure to feel in the presence of Ismail that he had met his match in his special line."[1]

Economic and Social Progress

To all this affability and charm of character Ismail added an extraordinary astuteness and an ambition worthy of his distinguished grandfather. Like Mohammad Ali, Ismail had in view the aggrandisement of Egypt through his own aggrandisement and that of the dynasty. To him Egypt was his large estate, and as such ought to be developed and exploited by himself.

Were the fellaheen lazy, conservative, and ignorant of

[1][Moberly Bell], *Khedives & Pashas*, by One Who Knows Them, p. 7.

modern economic practice? He did not care. He set out to possess as many cultivable acres as could be secured by his agents. And in a short space of time he secured for himself nearly one-fifth of the whole cultivable area of Egypt. He worked hard to get the utmost out of it by importing agricultural machines, and by exploiting the fellaheen on something like the *corvee* system.

But land alone could not gratify the ambitions of Ismail, and, to make up for the restricted profits of the land, the subtle merchant prince thought of a gigantic plan consonant with his grandiose aims. The plan was a masterly in its conception as it was ruinous in its effects. It amounted to nothing less than the attraction to the country of European capital, the adroit use thereof by the Viceroy, and the payment of very generous interest to entice investors.

Now in justice to Ismail it must be said that European speculators were to a certain extent responsible for the inception of this plan in the head of its author. It was the age of railway and steam companies, of banks, of syndicates: in a word, it was the age of "bubbles." The public were crazy about investing their money in foreign securities, and Egypt never stood higher in the estimate of the financial world than at the beginning of Ismail's reign. Nothing then was more natural than that the business prince should welcome capital, and that investors should offer it.

Egypt was then reaping the harvest of the American Civil War (1863—5). American cotton had received a damaging blow in consequence of the war and the abolition of slavery, and Egyptian cotton was booming. It was the chance of a lifetime for Egypt, and the Viceroy saw it and snatched at it. The Delta was well fitted by nature and by art for the cultivation of cotton. Successful experiments had been made during the reign of Mohammed Ali, and towards the end of Said's reign some 57,000 bales of cotton were being exported yearly. But Ismail was alone responsible for the wide extension of its cultivation and for making it the staple product of the country. He was the first to demonstrate how profitable it could be by cultivating it on a large scale on his estates. Soon pashas and beys followed suit, and the fellaheen, once antagonistic, now became convinced. They abandoned, in wholesale

fashion, their beloved traditional rotation of wheat and clover and took eagerly to the new cultivation.

This agrarian revolution produced a rural prosperity such as was never known in Egypt before. The war in America created a big demand for Egyptian cotton. The demand far exceeded the supply. Prices leapt to unprecedented heights. The cantar of cotton that used to cost one hundred piastres now rose to £12. Gold from Lancashire and from industrial Europe flowed into Egypt. Such extraordinary affluence and general prosperity in an agricultural country like Egypt could not fail to produce a state of reckless speculation and waste, not experienced before by either government or people.

Inflated by his initial success the Viceroy spent lavishly. A new and hitherto latent trait appeared in his character—a propensity to European extravagance translated into oriental terms. Palaces and public works began to appear as if by a rub of Aladdin's lamp. Pashas and beys lost no time in following in the steps of their monarch. They left their old medieval ways, and all of a sudden began to bask in the light of Western civilisation. They built small palaces and furnished them *á la mode*. Some discarded their native costume for the frankish *stamboulìah*. Instead of ambling decorously along on donkeys, the pashas now drove in victorias and hansoms imported from Europe. They also held receptions and fêtes, instituted grand harems like their master, and like him too they swallowed the bait held out to them by foreign adventurers and borrowed money fast.

The provincial notables and the uneducated wealthy had their own peculiar way of enjoying or utilising their wealth. First of all, after the style of their ancestors, it was to them a point of sound economy to hide a good deal of their wealth underground. They also bought jewels and bracelets and other feminine ornaments. Some, of course, must have improved their estates and bought more acres of land, and others must have shirked their work and contented themselves with an idle life. A good many more must have adopted the new style.

Forbidden by the precepts of their religion to touch alcoholic drinks and debarred by custom from enjoying society in the European sense, the fellaheen went to Cairo for a freer

life, and brought back with them white Circassian female slaves. The advent of the white slave into the village was an epoch-making event in rural domestic life. The white slave, closely veiled and well guarded, stole furtively into the fellah's mud hovel; but there she shut herself up and refused to countenance anything or anybody. She became inexorable and impervious to all entreaty, and the fellah's hopes of paradise in his house were seemingly shattered. He had brought home an insurgent goddess who, though mute, yet terrorised everybody, her master above all.

But gradually the heart of the goddess softened and she hinted to her obedient servant—her master, in other words—that she was not accustomed to live under conditions so repulsive. She explained to him by signs, for the Circassian knew but very few Arabic words, how she had lived in Cairo in the harem of Fulan Pasha, how she had been served there, and what she thought would help to reconcile her to him and to her new surroundings. The rich farmer, anxious to ingratiate himself with her, took the hint. He built a new house in place of the mud hovel, with full-sized windows, high roofs, a selamlik for male visitors and a separate apartment for the new mistress.

Now satisfied, his willing mistress shed fragrance on the squalid surroundings, and infused her beauty, her clean habits and her feeling of superiority into the blood of her offspring. The example of the wealthy fellah was copied by his friends and rivals, and so it happened that a kind of domestic revolution—for it was nothing less—followed on the heels of the agrarian revolution.

But the golden age was short-lived : with the restoration of peace in America the cotton bubble burst. Prices gradually fell, and competition with America was out of the question. Meanwhile taxes had increased, the soil was exhausted, and debts had been contracted. The prospect for Egypt looked gloomy, and a clear-sighted policy was necessary to pilot the ship out of danger.

An obvious policy for the Government or the Viceroy to have followed would have been to cut down expenses, reduce taxes, stop borrowing and make the best of a bad job. But Ismail had no intention of climbing down; he would not

return to the paltry budgets of his predecessors. The increased taxes had therefore to be maintained regardless of the impoverished state of the taxpayers. In order to pay their taxes and the interest on their debts after the slump in prices and the increase in their needs, the peasants were forced to fall back on usurers and borrow at ruinous interest. Lands had to be sold at low prices, some lands were abandoned altogether, and the small landowners nearly disappeared as a class.

Scenting game in the interior, the Greek greyhounds and others ran to help bleed the unhappy peasants. Dimitri and Dimitripopolos were two Greek pedlars who used to visit provincial fairs in the Delta, selling silks, manufactured garments, toilet accessories and liquors to the cotton kings. Hanna and Hayem were two docile-looking but actually incisive business men, who travelled in Upper and Middle Egypt to fit out the blue-shirted fellaheen. Observing that the Mudir's main business was to tour round the villages accompanied by a *sarraf* (local accountant) and a bastinado to exact payment on the spot, these pedlars and drapers had a humane inspiration. They hit on the idea of carrying their savings with their wares, and of accompanying the Mudir on his circuit, so as to give "first-aid" to the recalcitrant fellah, who under the *courbagh* might be forced to welcome a loan from the usurers on any terms. In this way many of the fellaheen lost their lands to the usurers, and so began the period, well known to Ismail's critics, of "bleeding" the fellaheen.

If the fellaheen were improvident and helpless in face of so sudden a turn in their fortunes, Ismail knew far better what to do. Not that when the ebb of the tide came it did not find him in a similar plight, but he managed in the end to extricate himself cleverly without the least appearance of financial ruin, thanks to the fertile imagination he was endowed with.

He again thought out a great plan. Let King Sugar succeed King Cotton, thought Ismail. Sugar plantations had proved successful in Prince Mustafa Fadel's estates in Upper Egypt. Outside Upper Egypt, where the climate is either too dry or too damp, sugar cultivation could not do well. So Ismail worked first for the annexation of the sugar areas belonging to Prince Fadel, his brother and possible heir-apparent. On

some pretext or other Ismail sent his brother to Constantinople in voluntary exile. Fadel's property was then liquidated and the Khedive negotiated a new loan to cover the expenses of taking over the Prince's vast estates.

Now the cultivation of sugar-cane necessitated a handy supply of water for the greater part of the year. A change in the system of irrigation then in use in Middle and Upper Egypt therefore became essential. The basin system had to give way to the perennial system. A canal running along the whole elongated track of land from Assiut to Bibeh—a distance of 180 miles—was dug and called the Ibrahimieh Canal, after the Khedive's father. Practically all the lands that bordered the canal were afterwards transferred to the Khedive by purchase, voluntary or involuntary. To further the development of this region a railway was built to Assiut to connect the thriving provincial centres with Cairo and Alexandria. Then the Khedive's grand scheme began to take shape. Nineteen sugar factories were constructed at different places. Strange to say, elaborate care was taken to build the factories in the centre of the estates and not, as one would expect, in the vicinity of the railway station. This was a serious mistake, and one that contributed to the failure of the scheme.

Four factories were already working on Ismail's accession, and produced about 55,000 cantars yearly; but Ismail was the first to introduce the cultivation of sugar into Egypt on a large scale. In 1867, Egypt began to export sugar, and to compete successfully with foreign sugar in European markets. A million cantars were produced annually and yielded from £700,000 to £800,000 a year.

The plant for the factories was imported from Europe. Usually a French engineer and an Egyptian director managed the factory, but gradually the Egyptian element predominated and the whole business was run by Egyptians. "So prodigious an extension in this particular element of trade," wrote Mr. McCoan, M. P., "had few precedents in commercial history, and shows how readily Egypt might be advanced to the very first rank among sugar-producing countries."[1]

In the end, however, the sugar game proved no more successful than the cotton game had done. Many and diverse are the

[1] J. C. McCoan, *Egypt As It Is* p. 167

criticisms which have been levelled against the scheme. Bad and corrupt management and waste of material, apart from the commercial risks and difficulties inherent in the enterprise, must have caused the failure of the scheme.

When the profits from these schemes failed to come up to the expectations of the Khedive and did anything but improve his financial position, the Government tightened its hold on the fellaheen's purses, and began to exact such heavy taxes, direct and indirect, as would have broken the backs of any people but the Egyptians.

Besides the land tax there were the date-palm tax, the *tanzim* (house planning), and the house taxes. Then there was the personal tax on every male person over ten years of age. There was the *ferdah* tax on patents and licences, on servants, operatives and tradesmen. Again there were customs and dues levied on sundry things ; succession or transfer duties ; stamp and registration duties ; salt tax ; customs, fisheries, octroi and road duties ; navigation and law duties ; window and carriage taxes, etc.

All these brought in an income of about £12,000,000, but this was not enough to meet all the liabilities incurrred by the Government, and the last piastre had to be flogged out of the fellaheen so that the Khedive could fulfil his heavy financial obligations.

Stone and Mortar

Though Ismail was hard-pressed financially, he thought it expedient to deceive his debtors by acting the spendthrift. Ismail, the prodigal, was either a part played by master mimic or an intentional rumour circulated for the deception of a credulous European public. For nothing could have been more foreign to the nature of this enterprising ex-landowner than lavish extravagance. The close attention, severity and minuteness which he showed to the last in superintending his estates and accounts belie the reputation he acquired for himself. No doubt Ismail lived royally, built palaces, held fètes and entertained foreign royalty and nobility, but his prodigality went no further. It was natural that a debtor should always try to give creditors striking proofs of his solvency. Besides, Ismail had a long list of public works to show for his

vast expenditure. "Everyone," said Ismail, "has a mania for something—mine is for stone and mortar".

It is now an established fact that in the sixteen years of his reign he accomplished in public works more than any king has done in any country in modern times. Even what Louis XIV had achieved for Paris could not surpass what Ismail achieved for Cairo and Alexandria. Go wherever you like in Cairo, you are sure to have your eye attracted by some grand building, garden or statue, avenue, fountain or road, or a whole quarter planned and executed by Ismail the Magnificent.

The changes that Cairo underwent in his days are an eloquent proof of the taste, energy and resources of the Khedive. Cairo, with the exception of the very old native quarters was to be modernised and embellished, no matter at what cost, provided it was done quickly. In his vast schemes of construction Ismail was racing against time. He had made up his mind that royal visitors who were on their way to attend the inauguration of the Suez Canal in 1869 should behold a capital city that could claim its place beside Paris—a capital city worthy of its Magnificent Ruler. Work began feverishly. Travellers in Egypt at that time tell us of the extreme inconvenience they experienced in going about and around Cairo, owing to the presence of building material everywhere.

In a few years the familiar features of Cairo disappeared the visitor arriving at Cairo station distrusted his own vision because of all the changes that confronted him. Instead of the green fields bordering the station he now saw blocks of buildings, with gardens and boulevards stretching in every direction. The Ezbekieh of Mohammed Ali's time with its native cafés, lattice windows, and Punch and Judy shows—the Ezbekieh which was the favourite promenade of the old Cairenes—now gave way to formal and massive modern blocks of buildings. Only a garden with two fountains remained. The garden was planted and trimmed after the style of Continentul tea-gardens, partly on the Versailles model and partly in imitation of the Bois de Boulogne. The Opera House was built and an equestrian statue of Ibrahim was set up in front of it.

Further south the Abdin Palace was built and was made the

official residence of the Khedive. To the north and west of Abdin a new quarter, afterwards called Ismailieh, was created. It became one of the most attractive quarters of the city. Lots of land were granted and facilities for payment were offered to those who wished to build houses.

To the west stood the monumental Kasr-el-Nil Bridge, completed in 1872 by a French company at a cost of £108,000. Crossing this bridge and turning to the left you saw the road to Giza open before you and thence the new road to the Pyramids. Turning to the right you came within sight of the famous Ghezireh palace, where royalty like Empress Eugènine, the Emperor of Austria, and the Prince of Wales had their apartments during their visit to Cairo. The palace was really more of a showplace than a regular habitation : "The grounds were dotted with lakelets and kiosks, shades and retreats from the noonday sun. Between the walks were lawns and groves with Venetian lamps hanging from every tree. Clusters of palms, tamarinds, almonds, magnolias, acacias, spice trees, frankincense, and a profusion of tropical flowers and sweet scented shrubs—kept fresh by the mist of fountains —all emitting throughout the park an eternal fragrance sweet as holy love."[1]

Ismail's mania for mortar and stone found its way even to the desert. A few miles away from Cairo lay a poor insignificant village called Helwan, whose dry air and medicinal waters Ismail knew would attract visitors if they were properly advertised to the public. The Khedive, as was his wont, took the matter in hand. Baths were established and an excellent hotel was built. A railway starting from near the Citadel connected the new watering-place with Cairo. The city of Cairo was then placarded with glowing advertisements for "Helwan les Bains." As the Khedive himself was the patron of Helwan, many Egyptians and Europeans responded to the call of the Khedive, and went there to take the water. Palaces and villas began to appear at Helwan and on the road leading to it. In a few years, thanks to its invigorating desert air, Helwan became the favourite aristocratic suburb of Cairo.

The modernisation of Cairo would have been deficient without the aid of the then new accessories of gas and water.

[1]William Dye, *Moslem Egypt and Christian Abyssinia*, p. 10.

A water company was established by Monsieur Cordier in 1865 to provide the city with pure fresh water. Monsieur Lebon had established a gas company at Alexandria in 1864, and in 1868 a branch of this company was established at Cairo.

To enumerate all the public works constructed during Khedive Ismail's reign is impossible. A bare catalague of these works would go far to convince the sceptic and to account for the of rise the debt. At the head of the list must be put the 910 miles of railway laid down while Ismail was Khedive. The line to Upper Egypt was the longest constructed. In 1865 Ismail conceived a grand scheme for the economic conquest of the Sudan by rail. A preliminary study and an estimate was made by Fowler, an English engineer. He was then ordered to proceed with the work, but the financial straits of the country at the time necessitated first a curtailment of the scheme and finally its abandonment altogether.

Ismail also has to his credit the building of 8,400 miles of canals and in 1876 Fowler was ordered to repair and complete the Barrages. But perhaps the most important public work sponsored by Ismail, apart from the construction of the Suez Canal, was the harbour at Alexandria. Ismail knew that the trade of Alexandria would suffer a great blow by the opening of the Suez Canal and that, unless it was in a position to compete with the Canal, Alexandria was as good as lost. He therefore determined to prepare Alexandria for the struggle at any cost. With this purpose in mind Ismail entered into a contract with Messrs. Greenfield and Co. for the construction of a great breakwater, an immense harbour mole and a line of quays. In the spring of 1871 the Khedive himself laid the foundation stone. The breakwater was to run for two miles across the mouth of the harbour, enclosing an area of several thousand acres of still water, deep enough to accommodate vessels of the largest size. The total cost of the scheme amounted to more than £2,000,000, an extraordinarily large sum which caused a lot of trouble afterwards.

Previous to this, in 1870, Suez had been adapted to its new role, its docks having been enlarged by Messieurs Dussaud Frères. Hand in hand with the renovation of harbours went the establishment of lighthouses. In this direction Egypt soon compared favourably with many other countries. There were

eight powerful lights on the Mediterranean coast and seven on the Red Sea. "Perhaps," writes McCoan, "on no part of the coasts of Europe is the light service more efficient than on these northern and eastern shores of Egypt."[1] This was due to the energy and intelligence of McKillop Pasha, the director.

As for telegraphs, only 350 miles existed at the death of Said. By the end of Ismail's reign more than 5,200 miles of telegraph stretched in every direction, even as far as the regions bordering the Blue and the White Nile.

In 1865 the post office service, which was worked as a private enterprise, was purchased from its Italian manager and established as a Government department, so that the existence of foreign post offices in Egypt soon became unnecessary. Under Muzzi Bey and Mr. Caillard the post office made excellent progress, and at the Conference of Berne in 1874 Egypt was admitted to the General Postal Union. Egypt was one of the original signatories of the Berne Convention.

One result of the impetus thus given to trade and transport was the establishment of a mercantile fleet of the utmost importance to Egypt. Early in his reign, the Khedive formed the Azizeh Navigation Company, with seven steamers to sail between Egypt and neighbouring coasts of Europe, Asia and Africa, with docks at Alexandria and Suez. The shares of the company were offered for sale to the public and an excellent service, managed by efficient captains, was started. The company competed favourably with foreign services, and its success was so great that the Khedive bought all the shares in the hands of the public. The company thus became the property of the Government and was renamed the Khedivial Mail Line in 1873. It then possessed sixteen ships for the Mediterranean service and nine for the Red Sea service. This mercantile progress soon enhanced the importance of the Egyptian fleet, which did great service to the Khedive in co-operating with his expeditions to Crete, Abyssinia and the Sudan.

Political Progress

Ismail's earnest endeavours to reform Egypt were only a means to a political end. Like his grandfather he had the independence of Egypt at heart; but unlike Mohammed Ali

[1] J. C. McCoan, *Egypt As It Is*, 258.

he was not in a position that would allow him to use force. Not that Ismail's forces were not equal to a fight with the Sultan's, but the Khedive had profited by the lessons of others. He well remembered how his grandfather had been foiled by the Concert of Powers, in spite of his crushing victories. The lessons of the Crimean War were only too fresh in his memory to leave him any doubt about the fate of those who tried to dismember Turkey or to resuscitate the Eastern question. For this reason Ismail, with the half-closed eye of the astute diplomat that he was, forged new weapons calculated to arouse no suspicion or enmity. Where Mohammed Ali would hurl threats Ismail lavished praise, and filled the air with his professions of subjection. Where Mohammed Ali would march men and iron to the battlefield, Ismail simply sent gold and silver to the Sultan and his ministers. Ismail believed, to his cost, that the dollar was mightier than the sword. And yet he was not less successsful than Mohammed Ali in so far as the achievement of Egyptian independence was concerned. Indeed, it is questionable whether the semi-independence of Egypt could later have been maintained by Egyptian rulers without the efforts of Ismail in that direction.

To begin with, Ismail had the unprecedented honour of acting as host to his suzerain, Sultan Abdul Aziz, in the first year of his reign—April 1863. The reception of the Sultan by his vassal at Alexandria was a historic event for Egypt. It ushered in a decade of mutual respect, forbearance and friendship between Sultan and Khedive. At Alexandria, we are told, the Khedive and his suite and all the notables walked on foot beside the carriage conveying the Sultan. There the Sultan held a levee and, addressing the representatives of the Powers, said :

> Je suis venu en Egypte dans le seul but de donner au viceroi une preuve nouvelle de ma bienveillance, et de voir, a cette occasion, cette partie si importante de mon empire. . . . Tous mes efforts tendent au developpement du bonheur et du bien-etre de toutes les classes de mon empire.

The Sultan then proceeded to Cairo by rail in company with the Viceroy. It was the Sultan's first journey in a railway train and his excitement was great.

In Cairo, the appearance of the Sultan in public struck the impressionable populace with awe and religious fervour. Whereas in Turkey the people would receive the appearance of their Padishah with hands folded and eyes cast down on the ground in extreme reverence and subjection, in Cairo the populace, on seeing the Sultan pass along the streets on his way to one of the famous tombs of the descendants of the Prophet, could not help yelling in a frenzy of religious fervour "Allahu Akbar !" and reciting aloud the opening chapter of the Koran. When this happened, the Sultan was naturally shocked at first, but after it had been explained to him he accepted the explanation with resignation. He visited the tomb of Mohammed Ali before leaving Cairo.

On April 16 the Sultan left Egypt on the *Feizi Gehad*, an ex-Egyptian frigate that was given to the Sultan by the Viceroy as a souvenir of his visit to Egypt.

Ismail then worked for a change in the rule of succession. The Porte, jealous of its rights, had in 1841 inserted in the firman a mischievous article to the effect that the viceroyalty of Egypt could be conferred by the Sultan on whoever the Sultan chose from the male descendants of Mohammed Ali. Mohammed Ali had combated this decision on the grounds that it would foster dissension in the family and anarchy in the country. The Powers had been convinced and the Porte had had to give way, leaving the right of succession, as in the Ottoman Empire, to the eldest of the male descendants.

Ismail, who loathed his brother, Mustafa Fadel, and dreaded his uncle, Abdul Halim, both heirs-apparent after Ismail, wanted nothing short of primogeniture. In addition to the price which he was ready to pay to effect the desired change, Ismail counted on the support of the Sultan himself, who welcomed the opportunity of creating a precedent before launching his own resolve of a similar change in the Ottoman constitution. Moreover Nubar, Ismail's able Minister of Foreign Affairs, was sent to the Chancelleries of Europe to enlist their support, or if that was not possible, their benevolent acquiescence.

Lord Clarendon, the English Foreign Secretary, lost no time in expounding his views. In his opinion the foreign Powers should be very cautious "inasmuch as it is impossible to

foresee what effect so great a change in the institutions of the country might have on the Mussulman population." Nevertheless he made it clear to his ambassador at Constantinople that, "although they had no particular interest in the question they would be glad of any arrangement that was agreeable to the Viceroy and assented to by the Sultan."[1]

Meanwhile the Sultan, who had his own cause of displeasure with Prince Fadel and who hoped to obtain in return from Ismail an advance of money large enough to relieve the Porte from its most pressing financial difficulties, readily acceded to the Viceroy's application.

In his bargaining with the Porte on the price to be paid, Ismail won an important point which was later to prick him on to his grandiose schemes in Africa: Mussowah and Suakin were ceded to the Egyptian Government on the payment of 10,000 purses (£T.50,000).

In the end the Viceroy made a spontaneous offer to the Sultan which he condescended to accept: to raise the tribute from 80,000 purses to 150,000 (£T.750,000). "The change in the succession," wrote McCoan, "put an end to the scramble for selfish aggrandisement during a single viceroyalty and substituted a dynastic interest in the welfare of the country which is its best guarantee for good government in the future."[2] The Khedive was heartily congratulated on his first success, and the English Government was the first to intimate its feelings. Ismail said, with truth, that the firman "has consolidated the work of my grandfather."

But Ismail was not to be content with one success. For him this was only a first step—a prelude to far-reaching concessions on the part of the Porte. Counting on the silent support of the British Government, thanks to the efforts of his friend Colonel Stanton, the English Agent and Consul-General, Ismail, early in February 1867, addressed representations to the Porte with a view to inducing the Sultan to grant him concessions similar to those enjoyed by the Danubian Principalities. Nubar was sent to negotiate. He wanted to augment his army and navy at will, to nominate to all ranks, to conclude commercial treaties directly with foreign Powers, to nominate

[1]Parliamentary Papers, Clarendon to Lyons, 7 May 1866.
[2] J. C. McCoan, *Egypt As It Is*, 120.

political agents before foreign courts, and finally he wanted the title of Khedive to be accorded him.

The Porte at first refused, but Ismail determined to press the matter, and threatened to withdraw his armies from Candia if his demand was not complied with. Lord Stanley, the English Foreign Secretary, transmitted the views of the British Government to his ambassador at Constantinople. The Government would not oppose any act of condescension which the Sultan was spontaneously inclined to perform towards the Viceroy. "The Porte, as a general rule," wrote Lord Stanley, "would do well to meet the wishes of the Viceroy."[1]

In Egypt, Lord Stanley permitted his Agent to assure the Viceroy "that he may reckon on the goodwill of Her Majesty's Government for their not thwarting any dispositions on the part of the Porte to meet His Highness's wishes."[2]

In June 1867 the Porte, persuaded by Nubar's silvery tongue, and still more by Ismail's munificence, conferred the title of Khedive on Ismail, with power to conclude administrative and commercial conventions, and to initiate laws and regulation for the internal government of Egypt.

These concessions from the Porte were a great triumph for Ismail, who now began to impress Europe even more than the Sultan himself. Armed with concessions tantamount to complete independence. Nubar hastened to congratulate his master, who was paying personal visits to the courts of Europe and was being accorded royal receptions everywhere. The next year Ismail made another European tour, inviting emperors and kings to be present at the inaugural ceremony of the Suez Canal.

Nothing gave the Porte more offence or more cause for umbrage and envy than this intentional insult. For Ismail, without permission from the Sultan and without previous consultation with him, invited the monarchs of Europe personally, and not through the medium of the Ottoman embassies, as was the formal custom. The Khedive did not even take the trouble to notify the Porte of the opening of the Canal until after it had happened. Moreover, the Khedive was taking illicit advantage of the firman of 1868 by contracting

1 Parliamentary Papers, Stanley to Lyons, 21 February 1867.

2 Ibid. Stanley to Stanton, 15 April 1867.

big loans, and by augmenting his navy and army to an unwarrantable degree.

This studied disrespect for the Porte decided the jealous Grand Vizier, Aali Pasha, to give the audacious Khedive a sharp lesson. Consequently, just a month after the opening of the Canal, the humiliating firman of 1869 was read publicly by the Khedive with the customary honours. It prohibited new loans and new taxes without the sanction of the Porte. The budgets of revenue and expenditure were to be submitted to the Porte, and ironclads were not to be built without permission from the Sultan.

Aali's lesson might have been a more severe one, had it not been for the warning given by the Powers. "Any attempt," wrote Clarendon to his Agent at Constantinople, "In the direction of deposing the Khedive or degrading him, would produce a most unfavourable and mischievous effect."[1] When it transpired that the Porte was about to suspend the firman of 1867. Clarendon again wrote that Her Majesty's Government could not too strongly advise the Sultan to abstain from any such measure, "for so peremptory a measure would place the Sultan more or less in antagonism with foreign Powers."[2]

Although the Khedive accepted the situation quietly, on the recommendation of the Powers, he was far from being satisfied. He bided his time and worked for the dismissal of Aali Pasha.

The Khedive then visited Constantinople and practised on both the Sultan and the new Grand Vizier, Mahmoud Pasha, all the different modes of persuasion at his command in order to obtain the revocation of the firman of 1869. The Porte was won over and a new firman was issued in 1872, confirming all firmans previous to 1869 and, by implication, the revocation of the firman of that year. The Sultan himself, without the knowledge of his Grand Vizier, addressed an imperiall letter to the Khedive in which the right of making foreign loans was expressly recognised.

The Khedive's strongest advocate in obtaining this new firman had been his purse. The English Ambassador believed that the Grand Vizier alone had received £150,000. When a

1 Parliamentary Papers, from Clarendon, 8 August 1869.

2 Ibid., Clarendon to Elliott, 5 November 1869.

year later, in June 1873, a new firman was promulgated embodying all existing privileges, Ismail spent over £1,000,000 in presents to the viziers and to the Sultan himself.[1]

The firman of 1873, together with the Treaty of London of 1840, formed the solid basis of Egypt's independence before the English occupation of 1882.

The firman of 1873 accorded the Khedive the hereditary right of governing Egypt and the Sudan according to the law of primogeniture. Egypt could enact all laws and decrees for her internal government, could negotiate and contract loans and commercial treaties with foreign countries. The Khedive was given the right to increase his army and navy at will. The only reservations on the independence of the country were the yearly budget of £750,000, the non-appointment of diplomatic representatives in foreign courts, and the prohibition on building armoured ships without the Sultan's consent.

Thus by bargaining and diplomacy Ismail secured home rule for Egypt. If he had sought those liberties in the customary way of wars and bloodshed, it might have cost Egypt heavily. Yet, in the light of what happened later, one cannot but regret the unlimited liberty of contracting loans. The price, too, little though it may seem by comparison with the invaluable concessions awarded, was certainly beyond the financial capacity of the country. But when all is said and done, the fact remains that the independence of Egypt, won by Mohammed Ali on the battlefield and confirmed by Ismail, would have become more or less a dead letter if the latter had not established the Khedivate on the sure basis of primogeniture and home rule.

Judicial Reform

Of all evils that existed in Egypt in the period after Mohammed Ali, the law courts and, in particular, the consular or capitulation law courts, were the worst and most mischievous.

The Capitulations, which were renewed from time to time, were a series of obligations voluntarily undertaken by the Porte towards Europe and the Powers, guaranteeing certain immunities and securities to foreigners in the Turkish Dominions. The original aim was to secure foreigners against

1 Parliamentary Papers, Elliott to Granville, 15 October 1873.

arbitrary violence and exactions on the part of local authorities. For this purpose foreigners were granted consular protection, and the consuls were given the right of penal and civil jurisdiction and of being present at mixed trials in native tribunals.

In the time of Mohammed Ali and Ibrahim, the power of the Viceroy was strong enough to curb the ambitions of the consuls. Even during the reign of Abbas the foreigners were kept under control. But when the hold of the Government began to weaken, the foreign adventurers who flocked to Egypt in the wake of De Lesseps and of other Europeans engaged by Ismail in the different departments or state began to claim by convention certain immunities that placed them above the law of the land.

In spite of the fact that foreigners in Turkey, from which the Capitulations originally came, were not allowed any extra-territorial rights, the foreigners in Egypt, under cover of the Capitulations, enjoyed several privileges. They were tried for offences before their own consular courts ; and even cases in which Egyptians were involved as litigants had to be taken to the consular courts to guarantee a speedy decision, for it was practically impossible to execute any sentence against a foreigner without the consent of his consul. A foreigner's person, house or shop was inviolable and inaccessible without the presence of the consul or his deputy. The consular courts were even empowered to try cases against the Government and to pass sentences against it.

Abuse of the Capitulations was carried further still. For though Turkey asserted her right of trying foreign criminals, in Egypt practice prevented the Government from trying foreigners for their crimes before the national courts. Foreign criminals in Egypt had to be tried and if necessary, imprisoned by their consuls ; in case of an appeal the matter had to be referred to the nearest European court to which the offender belonged. Thus a Frenchman would be referred to Marseilles, an Italian to Ancona, and a Greek to the court of Athens. Imagine a country which depended for its public security on sentences pronounced by foreign judges in foreign courts in other countries !

The consuls and their governments gradually abused the

Capitulations. The consuls were in the habit of protecting their compatriots under all circumstances. Anyone who invoked the support of his consul was unquestionably accorded that protection. The consuls even invited strangers to benefit by their protection, and went to the lengths of accepting the subjects of the Sultan and the Khedive as protégés—an act which constituted a glaring breach of the Capitulations. It was naturally the smaller European governments and their representatives who were mostly guilty of these abuses, which of course were a useful source of profit to them.

In the reign of Said Pasha it was estimated that the Government had to pay large sums of money as indemnities to the consular courts. Said was so annoyed by this state of things that on one occasion he could not help being heavily sarcastic at the expense of a representative of a small but very troublesome Power who, while standing in audience with his head uncovered, began to sneeze most menacingly. "Put on your hat, monsieur, for the love of God," said Said maliciously and with well feigned trepidation, "you will catch cold and then your government will ask for a heavy indemnity!"

The numerous miscarriages of justice resulting from this uncontrolled extra-territorial jurisdiction of the consular courts need not be dwelled upon: the whole system was an anomaly and a scandal.

The honour of clipping off the claws of the consuls was reserved for Nubar Pasha. Nubar, like his kinsmen Boghos and Artin, the two great diplomats of Mohammed Ali's reign, was a resourceful Armenian, well equipped for the wily arts of international diplomacy. The epithet "international" cannot be too strongly emphasised in connection with Nubar. He was of international fame, he worked with a view to promoting international interests, he introduced an international jurisdiction into Egypt—in a word, Nubar represented International Egypt, with all that is good or evil in that name.

Nubar thoroughly understood the aims of Ismail as a reformer, and dutifully co-operated with him in his efforts to secure autonomy and justice. It was Nubar who transacted business for the Khedive, who took part in conferences abroad or presided over them at home. For Nubar was a first-class writer and speaker, and although he was weak in matters of

detail, no one was better at propounding generalisations or stating a case in lucid and succinct terms. He could seize the main point of any question with admirable acumen. It was these abilities, much valued by the English, that helped to make Nubar *persona grata* with English statesmen.

Thus Nubar, who used to read Thiers's *Revolution* to Mohammed Ali, who acted as Ibrahim's secretary, and was Director of Railways in the reign of Said, had qualities and abilities that made Ismail entrust him with questions of high policy. He became minister in 1867, and at once took in hand all those tortuous negotiations by which Ismail in the first years of his reign succeeded in obtaining the right of primogeniture, the title of Khedive and the firman of autonomy of 1873. But Nubar's fame rests on more durable grounds.

For seven years he entirely devoted himself to the institution of international courts in Egypt, and was the force behind the negotiations that took place between the Khedive and the Powers on this subject.

In 1867 Nubar reported to the Khedive on the state of affairs, and in 1868 laid down the basis of his project. His ideal was that justice should emanate from the Government and, at the same time, be independent of it. Justice, he claimed, should be independent alike of the Government and of the consular courts. He therefore aimed at establishing Egyptian mixed courts in which the foreign element should predominate, so that both the authority of the consuls and the absolute power of the Khedive would be curbed.

England favoured Nubar's project and so did Austria and Germany, but France hesitated. At last an international commission sat in Cairo presided over by Nubar himself. Meanwhile a counter commission sat in Paris for the study of the question, with an eye to French interests. Suddenly the Franco-Prussian War broke out, and negotiations were interrupted in consequence. In 1872 they were resumed, but the jealousy of the Porte was roused to such a pitch that the Grand Vizier did his best to quash the reform. The Porte, however, was soon made to withdraw its opposition, thanks to the expostulations of England and Russia. An international commission was therefore held in Constantinople. There Nubar fought hard to give the new Egyptian courts the right

of criminal jurisdiction. "The opinion of the Khedive, on this subject," said Nubar, "was ever firm." But practically all the Powers were averse to this concession being made to the new courts. In face of unanimous opposition, the Khedive agreed to adopt the French amendments by which the criminal jurisdiction of the new tribunals was restricted to offences committed against courts, magistrates, judges and officers of justice during the exercise of their functions. All civil and commercial cases between foreigners belonging to different nationalities, or between these and Egyptians, regardless of personal status, were to be within the competence of the new courts. The administration had no right of interference in the execution of sentences, though the authorities should help by using force, if the magistrates or officers so directed.

France was dilatory, and held out for a long time without giving her approval. At last Ismail threatened to introduce the reform regardless of France, a threat which frightened the French colony in Egypt. So the French merchants at Alexandria requested the Government to give its approval. The Suez Canal Company also wrote in favour of the new courts. At last, in 1876, on New Year's Day, Riad Pasha (Nubar being then in disfavour) opened the courts at Alexandria without waiting for the French judge. The mandate of the new courts was to be renewed by the Powers every five years.

There were three courts with seventeen foreign judges in all and twelve Egyptians. Holland had three judges; Belgium, Sweden and Greece, two judges each; the Great Powers, America and Denmark one each. The President of the Court of Appeal was Dr. Lapenna, an eminent Austrian lawyer. Each judge received £1,600 a year and, though nominated by his government, was actually appointed by the Khedive. The supreme power rested with the Court of Appeal at Alexandria seven of whose judges were foreigners and four Egyptians.

This swamping of the national element in the mixed courts was a characteristic feature of the project. All Powers wished to have one representative or more as a judge; and, if they could manage it, some Powers wanted their representatives to sit at the trial of each case. "You see, the balance of power might be disturbed," Mr. Bell said, "if a Frenchman or an Englishman alone were to decide a question of five pounds

between Ali Mohammed and Spiro Dimitri, so the other great Powers must be represented too !"

In spite of all the drawbacks, the establishment of the mixed courts was an important achievement in the history of modern Egypt. They gave an impetus for the study of law on modern lines in Egypt, and caused the Government to institute the national law courts based on the Code of Napoleon, modified to suit Mohammedan conventions. The new national court were first introduced in 1883 seven years after the inauguration of the mixed courts.

And, in spite of the evils attendant upon introducing foreign courts using foreign languages, there can be no doubt that the mixed courts have been responsible for the prevalence in Egypt of a sence of justice and equity hitherto unknown to the people.

The Khedive welcomed the project, because the courts did away with the obnoxious consular courts and because they served as a proof of his good faith in respect of his engagements towards foreign creditors ; for it has to be borne in mind that the courts wielded a power superior to that of the State, although in principle it was impossible to execute the law against the State or the Khedive. According to one article, the Khedive and all the members of his family were liable to be judged by the courts in cases involving the interests of foreigners. The new courts could also decide the case of a foreigner whose rights of any sort were interfered with by an act of administration. Again, because the new courts had to take cognisance of the new fiscal laws enacted by the State, it was interpreted by the courts that no law modifying the existing financial order of things could be valid without the consent of the Powers who were signatory to *la Reforme*. This was a glaring encroachment on the legislative rights of the State. In fact, it virtually paralysed the State and its legislature until 1937, when the Montreux Convention put an end to the Capitulations.

Whether or not the Khedive foresaw the consequences of these clauses restricting the power of the State and the Khedive is a matter open to doubt ; but it is certain that the monster which Ismail created in place of the hydra-headed consular jurisdiction did in the end help to hasten his downfall. Did

Nubar fool the Khedive into approving an act that curtailed his powers? The Khedive was surely too shrewd to let such an important point pass unnoticed. But Mr. Dicey mentions that when the clause bringing the Khedive himself under the action of the law was explained to him by an eminent lawyer, the Khedive displayed the most intense indignation and said that, sooner than have signed acceptance of the code if he had understood its real bearing, he would have cut off his right hand.[1]

It seems probable that the Khedive must have known the import of the clause, but, considering his financial embarrassments, decided he could do nothing about it.

Unfortunately, after 1878 Nubar turned against Ismail, and it was partly through Nubar's machinations that Bismarck interfered in the crisis which occurred between Ismail and the dual control of England and France, and which ended in the deposition of Ismail.

In Article 13 of the treaty of alliance between Egypt and the United Kingdom in 1936, the system of Capitulations was pronounced to be no longer in accordance with the spirit of the times and with the present state of Egypt. It was agreed to bring about speedily the abolition of the Capitulations and the disappearance of the existing restrictions on Egyptian sovereignty in the matter of financial legislation and its application to foreigners.

At Montreux, in April 1937, an international conference was called by Egypt, assisted by England, her ally, in which the capitulatory Powers agreed to abolish the Capitulations in Egypt, and to keep the present mixed courts with competence in penal jurisdiction for a transitional period of twelve years, after which time the Egyptian Government will be free to dispense with the mixed tribunals.

Educational Progress

Any description of the Egypt that Ismail founded would be omitting one of the noblest features of Ismail's reign if it left out all mention of the educational reforms of the Khedive. Like his grandfather, Ismail realised from an early date that true national progress could only be established on the sure

1 Edward Dicey, *The Story of the Khedivate*, 129.

basis of a sound educational system. But while Mohammed Ali was obliged for purposes of state to provide first for the needs of the army, and to impress men so as to carry out his plans, Ismail was actuated by a more comprehensive motive, and therefore met with an eager response from the nation. And though Mohammed Ali can truly be said to be the founder of many of the institutions afterwards revived and remodelled by Ismail, it must be remembered that Mohammed Ali's zeal for many of these institutions ceased with the settlement of 1841, which necessitated the reduction of his army—the *raison d'être* of his reforms.

Abbas did nothing about many of these reforms, and Said, though more open-minded, interested himself in schools only in so far as they furnished him with efficient officers. The real revival of public instruction in Egypt was begun by Ismail, aided by such able educationists and organisers as Dor Bey, Rogers Bey, Cherif Pasha and Ali Mubarek Pasha. Dor was a Swiss with long educational experience: he was one of the ablest officials in the Egyptian Civil Service and did much for schools in Egypt. Rogers, who was Ismail's agent in London, was afterwards appointed educational inspector.

The first educational act of Ismail was the revival of the Supreme Educational Council and the divorce of schools from the War Department. The Khedive then allotted a part of the State revenue to be spent exclusively on building schools in the provinces. In 1867 he added to the educational budget the princely gift of El Wadi, the lands in the Sharkieh Province reclaimed by the Khedive from the Suez Canal Company. The returns of the Wadi realised £50,000 yearly. The budget of the Ministry of Education in Ismail's reign reached £150,000. The educational missions were revived, and during his reign 172 students were sent to Europe to specialise in different subjects. The number of advanced schools that were opened reached forty-three.

In 1868 he promulgated the organic law of public instruction, by which the three stages of education—primary, secondary and higher—were established in the country. Primary schools were started in provincial centres, secondary schools in Cairo and Alexandria, and higher schools in Cairo. Elementary schools were established in towns and villages,

Plans for building schools of different sizes were adopted and programmes of studies drawn up. Arithmetic appeared for the first time as a subject to be learnt with the Koran in elementary schools. Medical inspection was stipulated in the new law, and the quality and character of teachers were given prominence.

Special schools were started for nearly every conceivable subject. There were schools for music, languages, survey and agriculture, law and administration, veterinary medicine and technical subjects. Of these the military and naval schools reached a high standard of perfection. The number of schools in the provinces gradually increased and the Wakfs administration, thanks to Ali Mubarek who was Minister of both Public Instruction and Wakfs, co-operated with the Ministry by giving to public instruction what was due to it by endowment.

In 1873 a new step in education was taken. The Khedive's third wife opened a school for girls which was the first of its kind in the East. The school was afterwards taken over by the Ministry and received the name of Sanieh. The sheikhs also shared in this educational progress through the opening of the Dar el Ulum in 1872—an institute for turning out educated teachers to teach Arabic and kindred subjects on modernised lines. This was the first normal school opened in modern Egypt, and was followed shortly afterwards by the opening of a college for training teachers of foreign languages, scientific and literary subjects.

The results of all this educational progress were soon felt. Books on various subjects were written, newspapers began to be published, the Government itself giving the impetus by publishing three papers, the official, the military, and the scholastic.

The Khedive ordered the establishment of a national library by bringing together the remains of the old libraries lying neglected in the different mosques, and by adding to them a selection of modern European books. To encourage authorship and the production of literature, the Bulak printing press was provided with the latest machines and appliances, and a paper factory was set up near it.

It was Ismail who discovered Mariette, who in 1851

unearthed the Serapium, and continued his researches near the Pyramids until his death in 1881. In his reign Egyptology became a science, and a national museum was founded. It was under Ismail that Mubarek and El Falaky, the Engineer and Astronomer, Mohammed Ali El Bakly, the surgeon-physician, and Rifaa and Fikri, both men of letters, flourished.

So enthusiastic was Ismail in his endeavours to popularise education that he often personally attended school celebrations and gave out the prizes. Practically all the students attending the primary, secondary and higher schools were educated, fed, clothed, and even boarded at State expense. The educational movement under Ismail was felt in the remotest corners of Egypt. The number of pupils attending schools all over the country exceeded 100,000 out of a male population of nearly 2,500,000—a proportion which was then far in advance of some European countries. There were 4,817 schools of all classes.

Ismail's patronage of education extended to European missionary schools in Egypt. His donations of land and money to the missions helped to establish efficient schools for the European colonies in Egypt and also for the Egyptians themselves.

The intellectual renaissance created by Ismail in Egypt constitutes the Khedive's first claim on the gratitude of modern Egyptians.

Chapter VIII

CANALISTS AND CAPITALISTS

SAID had bequeathed to Ismail two legacies of great consequence both for Ismail himself and for the future of Egypt as a whole. For when Ismail came to the throne Said had already contracted the first foreign loan and had signed an extremely disadvantageous concession in favour of De Lesseps, for the cutting of a canal joining the mediterranean to the Red Sea. Loans and the canal together were responsible for the moulding of the Egyptian Question in modern times.

The idea of joining both seas together was an old one. But in ancient and medieval times the connection was made through the River Nile, from which a canal had to be dug through the desert east of the Delta to the Red Sea. In modern times it was Napoleon and his savants who first considered the possibility of a maritime canal connecting both seas.

Lepère, the chief engineer who accompanied Napoleon to study the project on the spot, prepared a special report on the subject, and came to the conclusion that there was a difference of a few matters between the levels of both seas. Lepère's report was the basis of all future studies of the subject, and the source from which De Lesseps derived his first inspiration.

With the publication of Lepère's report, famous engineers —French engineers especially—began to interest themselves in the subject. A French group with humanitarian and international aims who called themselves the Saint-Simoniens (they were first presided over by Count Saint-Simon and later by his successor Prosper Enfantin) favoured the idea of joining both seas, formed a society for a study of its possibility and actually sent delegates to interview Mohammed Ali on the subject.

But Mohammed Ali was adamant in his refusal to commit himself. To begin with, he was actuated by a desire to concili--ate England, who staunchly deprecated the idea of a maritime canal and who never tired of persuading the Viceroy against

the scheme. But Mohammed Ali would not have so readily listened to England's arguments if these had not tallied precisely with his own views. The construction of the canal, in Mohammed Ali's opinion, would place Egypt with regard to the Powers in the same plight that Turkey was because of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. Besides, once the canal was dug, Alexandria, the favourite commercial depôt of Mohammed Ali, would be doomed, and the stream of gold that ran through the Delta from Suez to Cairo and Alexandria would change its course and pass through the canal, with Egypt acting the part of a sorry sentinel. Rather than this should happen, Mohammed Ali was ready to risk his popularity with the French. From the outset he devoted his energies to the success of the overland route. In 1844 he entered into a commercial treaty with England by which Egypt was commissioned to take in hand, on certain conditions, the transit trade of Great Britain through Egypt. An Egyptian State Transit Company was therefore formed with competent directors at its head.

It was then imagined that the Suez Canal project had been indefinitely postponed. But it was not till later on, under Abbas I, that England dominated the councils of the Viceroy sufficiently to secure the apparent abandonment of the project by causing a railway to be built between Cairo and Alexandria, and by planning a line between Suez and Cairo.

With the accession of Said in 1854, the project of the Suez Canal was again revived, and its advocates had strong hopes of its being carried out. Ferdinand de Lesseps, the celebrated French genius who was the active promoter of the scheme, enjoyed the privilege of being the intimate friend of the new Viceroy, so that he had little trouble in inducing the Viceroy to grant the concession. The Viceroy no doubt must have hesitated for some time before finally committing himself. His fear of England was enough to make him think twice. But De Lesseps pointed out to him that France was entitled to the concession in compensation for a concession granted to England—the Cairo-Alexandria line. It must be borne in mind that by that time the idea of the canal had become familiar, and De Lesseps never tried of talking Suez Canal to the Viceroy wherever and whenever circumstances permitted, until at

last the great moment of persuasion came one day on their way from Alexandria to Cairo along the Western Desert route when Said, accompanied by his ministers and officers, was conducting an army of 10,000 men. De Lesseps once more seized the opportunity of divulging his grand plan to the Viceroy. The Viceroy was convinced, and asked his friend to prepare a detailed statement on the subject. Said was overwhelmed by the idea of winning the title of "benefactor of the human race" at a comparatively small cost. For it could not be considered dearly bought if obtained, as De Lesseps suggested it could be, by simply signing a paper authorising the formation of a universal company which would do the work at its own expense.

"Your name," said De Lesseps, "will live on when the names of kings who built pyramids are forgotten !" Said consented, regardless of the financial and political difficulties that lay ahead of the project.

The first act of concession was granted in 1854 and the second, together with the statutes, was dated 1856. It took four years to make the necessary preparations for carrying out the scheme, during which time eminent engineers from all parts of the world were invited by the Viceroy to study the project on the spot. When they came they were ably assisted by two famous French engineers in the service of the Egyptian Government. Mougel and Linant, who had prepared a most useful report on the subject. The conclusions of the international commission were favourable, and their decision was announced to the world of finance.

In 1858 Lesseps launched his company with a capital of 200,000,000 francs divided into 400,000 shares ; each share was later divided into two and so the total number was raised to 800,000 shares. On 25 April 1859 the digging of the Canal began in that portion of land that lay between Lake Manzelah and the Mediterranean.

The act of concession was unanimously pronounced to be most disadvantageous to Egypt. "Never has there been a concession," says Dicey," so profitable to the grantee and so costly to the grantor, as that given by Said to the Suez Canal Company."[1] To begin with, for the sake of maintaining the

1 Edward Dicey, *The Story of the Khedivate*, 40.

company, Said was made to buy shares which could not be sold in England, Austria and the United States of America where the scheme was discouraged. These amounted to 85,506 shares ; in all the Viceroy bought more than 176,602, nearly half the original shares issued. Again, the agreement stipulated that four-fifths of the workmen should be Egyptians. This was interpreted by the Company to mean that the Government of the Viceroy had to maintain a standing army of about 20,000 men to work on the canal. Also by the terms of the contract the Egyptian Government had to concede to the company all the lands adjoining the canal on both sides, to a width of two kilometres. The Government further conceded the right of constructing a fresh-water canal taking its water from the Nile to Lake Timsah and then flowing southwards to Suez and northwards to the Mediterranean. The Company was authorised to charge the fellaheen for using the fresh-water canal and was exempted from paying any fees or taxes. In compensation for all the expenses incurred, it was agreed that Egypt should receive 15 per cent. of the net profits of the Company.

It was asserted in the act of concession that navigation in the Canal would be free to all nations without distinction of flag, and that the Canal dues would be levied from all alike.

The duration of the contract was limited to ninety-nine years from its inauguration. As the Canal was opened to navigation on 17 November 1869, the Suez Canal Company should come to an end on 16 November 1868 and the Egyptian Government should then take over the management of the Canal with all its material and accessories. These will be evaluated by agreement or by arbitration in case of need.

Although it was stated that the sanction of the Porte was necessary before carrying out the contract, De Lesseps and Sald did not wait for this formality. The Porte, backed by England, withheld its consent for about eight years, during which time the Porte had more than one reason to complain of the Company.

The demands of the Egyptian Government made on the agricultural classes in order to provide the stipulated quota of men caused the greatest misery among the people. Not only were the fields deprived of their essential hands, but the men

themselves had to leave their fields and families, and sacrifice their lives by exposure and underfeeding in marshy ditches. No wonder therefore the Porte took up an antagonistic attitude towards the Company.

But so long as Said continued to reign, the Suez Canal Company was able to carry on its work without danger from any quarter. Things began to look bad for the Company, however, when Said lay on his deathbed. Sir Henry Bulwer, British Ambassador to the Porte, then paid a flying visit to Egypt, where he met the future Viceroy and intimated to him the wishes of the British Government. "The Ambassador has seen my nephew," said Said to De Lesseps. "Si je pars vous êtes donc averti ; vous avez á vous défendre, non pas contre lui personellement, car je sais qu'il a de l'amitié pour vous, mais contre la politique qui pesera sur son gouvernement."[1]

The fears of the Company came true. No sooner was Ismail on the throne of Egypt than he received a formal letter from the Porte in which three points regarding the Canal were emphasised. First that the Canal should be used exclusively for commercial purposes ; secondly, that the right of possessing land on both sides of the Canal should be withdrawn ; and thirdly, that forced labour on the Canal should be abolished.

Although Ismail himself was not moved by an antagonistic feeling towards the Company, he nevertheless loathed the obnoxious conditions of the concession agreed to by his predecessor. No burden was more onerous and no injustice more glaring than that the subjects of the Viceroy should be driven in tens of thousands and made to give up all that was dear to them in order to toil for Monsieur de Lesseps and for the world at large. The Viceroy therefore lost no time in communicating to De Lesseps the orders he had received from the Porte. The immediate effect was that the number of labourers was restricted to 6,000 instead of the original number of 20,000, and the miserable pittance of the workers was increased.

Ismail was also anxious to deprive the Company of certain privileges which in his opinion militated against his rights as head of the state. In particular, he wanted to take over the fresh-water canal and to reclaim the land occupied by the

1 Ferdinand de Lesseps, *Letters et documents.*

Company. In short, "Ismail wanted the Canal to serve Egypt and not Egypt the Canal." He therefore insisted on a modification of the original contract. As a proof of his good faith, he took over all the liabilities of his predecessor in respect of his allotment of shares, which he proposed to hold as ordinary shares liable to any call that might be made by the Company.

The Company was then in a bad plight and was so badly in need of money that its dissolution became imminent. In this emergency De Lesseps counted on his government. "If new difficulties should arise," said De Lesseps, in his address to the Company, "the government of the Emperor knew always how to support its projects 'sur le droit, sur sa propre force, et sur celle de l'opinion publique.' "

It seems that De Lesseps must have had a lucky star that guided him through the whole business. To begin with, his personal friendship with Said gave him the concession in face of a thousand difficulties raised against him on political and technical grounds. In the second crisis, when the Company was threatened with bankruptcy and failure, it was his good fortune that Napoleon III became Emperor with Eugènie, a cousin of De Lesseps, as Empress.

As no settlement could be arrived at between Ismail and the Company or between the latter and the Porte, Ismail innocently agreed to refer the case to the Emperor Napoleon III for arbitration. Ismail obviously did not anticipate that Napoleon would simply take a one-sided interest in the case and give judgment entirely in favour of his compatriot. What happened was that the inspired lawyers of the Emperor busily concerned themselves with assessing the amount of indemnities due to the Company, and it was not long before the findings of the Emperor were launched on the public. These findings were a showpiece of juridical favouritism.

No doubt the Company, the lawyers, and all the rest concerned had in mind the extraordinary wealth that was flowing into Egypt at the time, and this perhaps was the reason why their estimates were out of all bounds. The Emperor acceded to the just demands of the Egyptian Government, but awarded the Company indemnities to be paid by the Government for not providing the full quota of the *corvee* labour; for the value of the water which the completed canal would furnish; and,

to crown all, for the Company's munificence in renouncing the rights of fishing when the canal was completed!

Imagine the Company renouncing a right that never existed and asking an indemnity for it! The total indemnity amounted to 84,000,000 francs, a little less than half the original capital of the Company.

Although Ismail was taken unawares by this award to the Company, he seized the opportunity to release Egypt from any unjust claims that could possibly be made by the Company in the future. For this immunity he agreed to pay the sum of £3,000,000 and to facilitate payment De Lesseps suggested that the Company should take the interest (plus an appropriate discount) on the Khedive's shares up to 1895.

Thus financed, the Company was restored to life and resumed work with vigour. The Porte was made to sanction the charter of the Company in March 1866, and the Company made up for the loss of the *corvee* labour by engaging labourers from Southern Europe and the Levant. It was further assisted by the use of dredging machines, and by the co-operation of a group of aspirant engineers who helped De Lesseps with devotion and intelligent application to work.

Work on the Canal progressed rapidly, thanks to the newly invented machinery, and by 1868 the waters of the two seas were joined together. When the work was finished, both Prince and author were intent upon making capital out of the inauguration ceremony. The Khedive in particular wanted a fitting advertisement to impress the moneylending world with his incredible wealth, and so entice them to lend him more without suspecting the true state of things. The Khedive therefore left on that memorable visit to Europe when he personally invited the crowned heads to assist at the inauguration. Ismail was then at the zenith of his reputation ; he had just acquired complete home rule from Turkey, and was admired and lavishly praised in Europe, so much so that the Sultan became jealous of him.

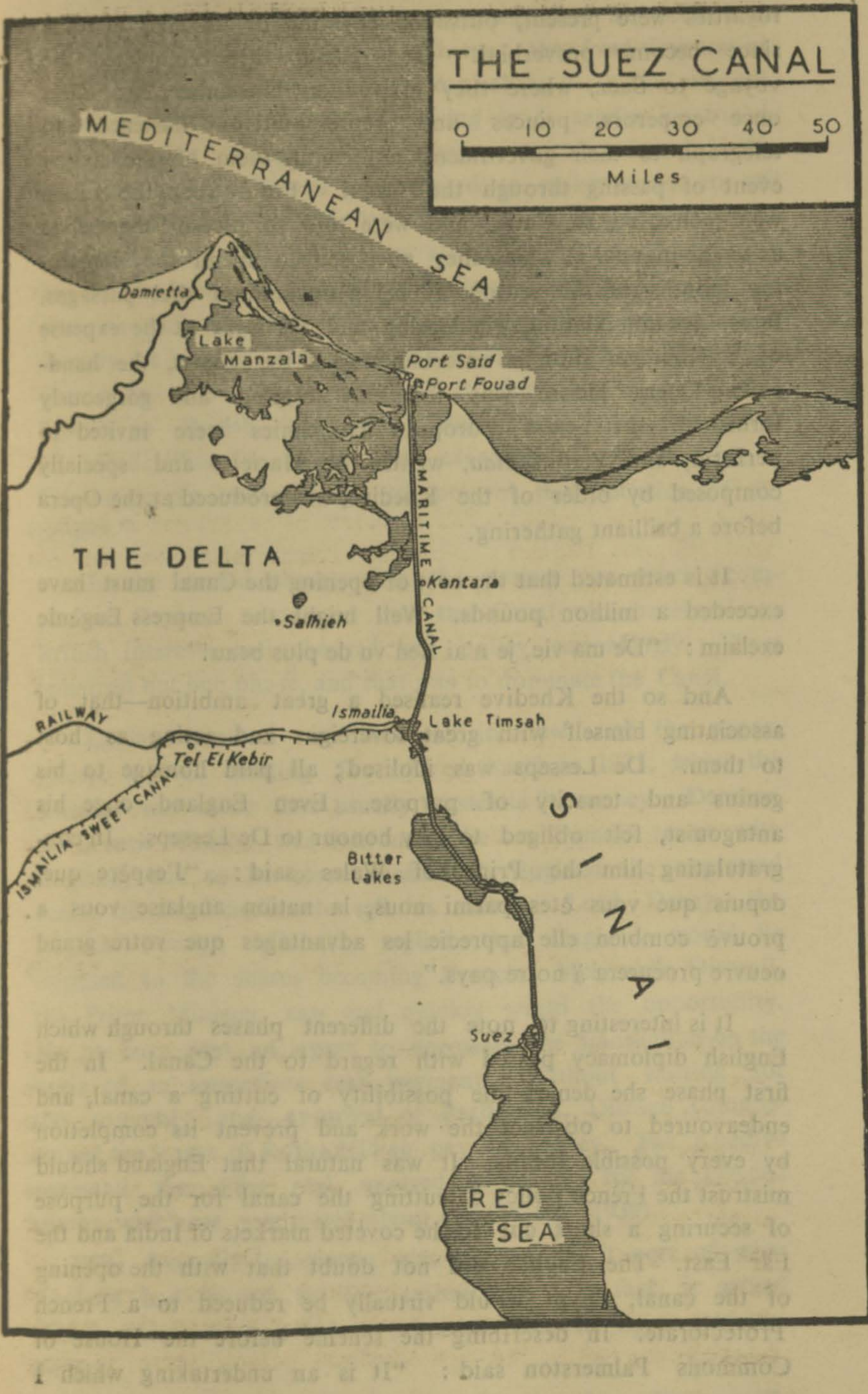
The morning of 16th November 1869 was a memorable day for Egypt, as well as for Ismail, De Lesseps, and the world at large. Monarchs, princes and distinguished visitors from different parts of the world headed by the Empress Eugènie, the Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria-Hungary, and the

Crown Prince of Prussia were present as guests of the Khedive to attend the formal opening of the Canal. At eight o'clock the *Aigle* arrived at Port Said, with the Empress Eugenie on board. The fleet consisting of about sixty ships of all nations fired a grand salute, and the *Aigle* anchored alongside the Khedivial yacht *Mahroussa*, on the other side of which lay the Austrian imperial yacht. The Khedive and De Lesseps at once went on board to welcome the Empress. In the afternoon a united service and a benediction was pronounced by ulemas and by Coptic and Roman Catholic priests. Then a royal procession a quarter of a mile long made its way to the pavilion specially erected for the Khedive and his guests. The Empress Eugènie was leaning on the arm of the Emperor, with the Khedive and the Crown Prince of Prussia on either side. A magnificent gathering of princes and officers in full-dress followed. The occasion began by a prayer in Arabic; then Empress Eugènie's confessor, Bauer, made an eloquent speech. Addressing the Khedive, he said:

> Jouissez aujourd'hui pleinement de votre glorieux succès. En ce moment, á cette grande heure de votre vie et de votre regne l'orient et l'occident vous remercie par ma voix. Merci, Monseigneur, d'avoir voulu ce fait,—d'avoir fait sooner cette heure. Merci d'un coeur emu, au nom du Christianisme,—merci au nom de La France, au nom de l'Europe, merci au nom de toute l'humanitè; dont les destinèes font un grand pas en ce moment, grace á votre Altesse, qui veut le bien, et grace à Dieu qui le bènit.

The tribute paid to the genius of De Lesseps was equally glowing.

The next morning, November 17, at eight o'clock, the Canal was opened formally. A procession of vessels of various nationalities, headed by the *Aigle*, on board of which was the Empress Eugènie, passed through the Canal. At Ismailia the procession landed, and the guests were conducted to the new palace erected for the purpose. Here there was feasting and banqueting on an unprecedented scale. Delicacies from all parts of the world had been procured for the guests: the choicest wines were flowing freely. That evening the magnificence of the ball in the new Khedivial p: lace, where so many


THE SUEZ CANAL
0 10 20 30 40 50
Miles
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Damietta
Lake Manzala
Port Said
Port Fouad
THE DELTA
MARITIME CANAL
Kantara
Salhieh
Ismailia
Lake Timsah
RAILWAY
Tel El Kebir
ISMAILIA SWEET CANAL
SINAI
Bitter Lakes
Suez
RED SEA

royalties were present, outshone anything of its kind and has since become proverbial. The guests then completed the voyage to Suez, where they arrived on November 20; and at once emperors, princes and representatives hastened to telegraph to their governments informing them of the happy event of passing through the Canal. From Suez the guests were conveyed to Cairo, and were told to please themselves as to the manner in which they purposed to spend the remaining months of the season, it being understood that passages, fares, accommodation, sightseeing and all were at the expense of the Khedive. For the entertainment of the guests, the handsome Opera House was feverishly erected and gorgeously furnished. First-class European companies were invited to perform, and Verdi's *Aida*, written by Mariette and specially composed by order of the Khedive, was produced at the Opera before a brilliant gathering.

It is estimated that the cost of opening the Canal must have exceeded a million pounds. Well might the Empress Eugènie exclaim: "De ma vie, je n'ai rien vu de plus beau!"

And so the Khedive realised a great ambition—that of associating himself with great sovereigns and acting as host to them. De Lesseps was idolised; all paid homage to his genius and tenacity of purpose. Even England, once his antagonist, felt obliged to pay honour to De Lesseps. In congratulating him the Prince of Wales said: "J'espère que, depuis que vous ètes parmi nous, la nation anglaise vous a prouvè combien elle apprecie les advantages que votre grand oeuvre procurera à notre pays."

It is interesting to note the different phases through which English diplomacy passed with regard to the Canal. In the first phase she denied the possibility of cutting a canal, and endeavoured to obstruct the work and prevent its completion by every possible means. It was natural that England should mistrust the French policy of cutting the canal for the purpose of securing a short cut to the coveted markets of India and the Far East. The English did not doubt that with the opening of the canal, Egypt would virtually be reduced to a French Protectorate. In describing the scheme before the House of Commons Palmerston said: "It is an undertaking which I

believe, in point of commerial character, may be deemed to rank among the many bubble schemes, that from time to time have been palmed upon gullible capitalists. . . . The obvious political tendency of the undertaking is to render more easy the separation of Egypt from Turkey. . . . It is founded also on remote speculations with regard to easier access to our Indian possessions. . . . I can only express my surprise that Monsieur Ferdinand de Lesseps should have reckoned so much on the credulity of English capitalists, as to think that by his progress through the different commercial towns in this country he should succeed in obtaining English money for the promotion of a scheme which is in every way so adverse and hostile to British interests." "Her Majesty's Government," he added, "has for fifteen years exercised all its influence at Constantinople and Egypt to prevent the execution of the project."

In the second phase, when the project was nearing completion, England recognised that the Canal was beneficial to British interests and changed her policy accordingly. There remained but one phase, and that was to dominate the Canal.

England worked with that end in view until the opportunity it was waiting for offered itself in 1875, when the Khedive was more than usually in straits for money. Decazes, the French Minister, was desirous to be on friendly terms with England, and so he communicated to England the expressed desire of the Khedive to sell his shares. Lord Derby, the English Foreign Minister, replied that England would be opposed to the shares becoming French. Meanwhile Disraeli, the Prime Minister, saw and quickly seized the opportunity. He at once sent an agent to negotiate the transaction on the basis of an immediate cash payment. Without waiting for the assembly and approval of Parliament, Disraeli commissioned the house of Rothschild to pay the money. The Khedive accepted the offer and received £4,000,000 for his 176,602 shares, which are now worth about £28,000,000 (1939).

The financial investment was only a small part of what England had gained by the transaction. In fact, it gained nothing less than political preponderance in Egypt and the Sudan.

The French never forgave the Khedive for selling out his

shares to England, but it is significant that De Lesseps manifested no such hostility to the Khedive. De Lesseps must have been thinking of the financial good that would accure to the Company, just as the Khedive was probably thinking of the political and diplomatic support he would receive from England. Since that time the Canal has become an inseparable part of the Egyptian question, and has acquired so great an importance that it is now impossible to say which has the greater value in the eyes of the interested Powers—the Canal or Egypt itself.

To Egypt the opening of the Canal represented a distinct and permanent loss. The transit trade which once filled the coffers of the customs house and gave employment to thousands of Egyptian hands now completely ceased. Again, at first there was great fear that Alexandria would be unable to hold its supremacy for long, but the Khedive was alive to this danger, and soon took measures to make Alexandria the best port in the Mediterranean after Marseilles.

The part that Egypt played in the completion of the Canal was tremendous. It is estimated by expert authorities that Egypt must have contributed more than half the cost of the Canal, which amounted to £18,000,000. The cost of the shares that Egypt had bought, together with the indemnities paid to the Company and the expenses of opening the Canal —not to mention other expenses—amounted to about £E8,000,000.

To add to all these losses, Egypt was driven in her stringent financial need first to sell her shares to England in 1875, and after that to part in 1879 with the 15 per cent. portion of the net profits of the Company. The shares would now bring in an annual income of about £2,000,000 and 15 per cent. of the profits would be worth £800,000 sterling annually.

But though Egypt was the loser financially she was recompensed politically, for with the recognition of the principle of neutrality of the Canal, the political status of Egypt was enhanced internationally. Henceforward the jealous eyes of the Powers were riveted on the country; and although England hastened to plant her feet in the country soon after her purchase of the Canal shares, she dared not tamper with its legitimate status. It was not until the First Great War that

she was tempted by force of circumstances to declare a protectorate over Egypt, and thus assume the rights once vested in the Sultan, her enemy. But England soon discovered that the protectorate was inacceptable to Egpyt, and the complete independence of the country was proclaimed by King Fuad on 15 March 1922.

The principle of the neutrality of the Suez Canal was asserted by the representatives of the Powers at a conference held in Constantinople in 1888, in which it was agreed that the maritime Suez Canal should always, in times of war as in times of peace, permit the free and open access of all merchant ships and warships without distinction of flag. The Canal should never be submitted to the exercise of the right of blockade. This convention was signed by the Great Powers, together with Spain, Holland and Turkey, whose interests in the Canal were admitted. Britain signed the convention with the reservation that the terms of it should apply only in so far as they were compatible with the actual situation in Egypt, i.e. with the interests of the British occupation. This reservation was finally rescinded by the Entente Cordiale between Britain and France in 1904, and the neutrality of the Canal was reasserted by the Peace of Versailles in 1918. This neutrality has usually been respected. It was maintained when Spain was fighting the United States of America in 1899 and Spain had to send warships to the Philippines; and when Russia sent her Baltic fleet to fight Japan in 1905. When Italy fought Turkey in 1911 and Abyssinia in 1935, the Suez Canal was open for the navigation of warships and merchant ships of Italy, in spite of the sanctions imposed against Italy in 1935.

Only twice has the neutrality of the Canal been broken. The first time was during the Arabi revolt in 1882, when England surprised the Nationalist leader by a military descent on the Canal Zone, a descent which was the prelude to the Battle of Tel El Kebir and the military occupation of the country. The second took place on 3 February 1914, when a Turkish army was proceeding to invade the country across the Canal from Syria. The Turks were thwarted in their plans and had to retreat.

But the principle of neutrality was considered to have been seriously affected by the treaty of alliance between Egypt and

Britain made in London in 1936. In Article 8 of that Treaty it is stated that:

> In view of the fact that the Suez Canal, whilst being an integral part of Egypt, is a universal means of communication between the different parts of the British Empire, His Majesty the King of Egypt, until such time as the High Contracting Parties agree that the Egyptian Army is in a position to ensure by its own resources the liberty and entire security of navigation of the Canal, authorises His Majesty the King and Emperor to station forces in Egyptian territory, in the vicinity of the Canal—with a view to ensuring in co-operation with the Egyptian forces the defence of the Canal. The presence of these forces shall not constitute in any manner an occupation and will in no way prejudice the sovereign rights of Egypt.

In an annex to the treaty it was agreed that the number of British troops garrisoning the Canal Zone should not exceed 10,000 men and 400 pilots, together with the personnel required for administrative and technical duties.

These provisions were interpreted by Italy as a revocation of the principle of neutrality agreed upon at Constantinople in 1888, for the treaty gave Britain the exclusive right of assisting Egypt in the defence of the Canal. She not only took exception to the treaty of alliance, but also clamoured for a revision of the statutes of the Company with a view to gratifying her own personal ambitions. Italy was apparently forgetting that the Canal was constructed on Egyptian soil as a result of a concession granted by the ruler of Egypt, and that Egyptian labour and Egyptian funds were the mainstay of the Suez Canal Company. For it should be noted that the Canal is not (like Gibraltar or the Dardanelles) a natural passage between the high seas, but an artificial aqueduct dug by the hand of man on Egyptian soil. Italy, and other European Powers, were ignoring this fact, and were forgetting that Egypt, in her new status of an independent nation, had full liberty of choosing her friends and allies. She was likewise forgetting that, as Egypt in a few year's time would be the sole arbiter of the Suez Canal, no important modification of the laws governing the Suez Canal Company could now be effected without her consent.

CHAPTER IX

A LEAP INTO THE DARK CONTINENT

WHEN Mohammed Ali's aggressive plans against the Ottoman Empire began to engage the serious attention of the diplomatic world, suggestions were not wanting at the time for diverting Mohammed Ali's attention from the perilous road he was following. In a dispatch from Lord Beauvale, the British Amabassador at Vienna, to the British Agent at Cairo, the Ambassador says: "If the object of Mohammed Ali be really the establishment of his family, it is only in Africa that that establishment can be solidly fixed. There he will have all Europe friendly to him; there he may receive from it a guarantee which shall exempt him from all fear of attack."[1] Nothing could have been more sincere or natural than Beauvale's advice; and had Mohammed Ali in fact concentrated his efforts on the discovery of the Nile Valley up to its sources, and on conquering the immense territories through which the Nile flows, he would have done much more good for Egypt than he actually did by fighting Turkey and conquering Palestine and Syria.

In any case Egypt could not possibly resist the urge to secure her vital interests in the Nile Valley, and it was partly for this reason that Mohammed Ali had sent his expedition to conquer the Sudan in 1820. Mohammed Ali, who had the example of Napolean always before him, furnished his expedition with scientists and expert European metallurgists—a procedure which was afterwards copied by his grandson Ismail. His endeavours to keep the Sudan united to Egypt, and his zeal for the discovery of its unknown parts and for the prosperity of its people, was proved by his memorable visit to the Sudan in October 1938, when he was nearly seventy years of age.

In the *Journal Officiel* a reference to the remarkable

[1] Foreign Office Records: Austria. Beauvale to Hodges, November 1839.

enthusiasm with which Mohammed Ali had envisaged the discovery of the sources of the Nile was made in these words :

> Son Altesse qui n'ignore pas l'interêt que le monde savant attache à la dècouverte des sources due Nil Blanc, restèes inconnues jusqu'â ce jour malgrè de nombreuses tentatives faites, a eu la noble ambition d'arriver elle même à ce but dèsirè et pour l'atteindre, elle a mis sur le fleuve, au commencement de 20 Septembre, 1838, trois grands dehabiehs bien approvisionnèes avec soixante marins d'èlite sous le commandement de trois officiers de son escadre, instruits dans le dessin, les mathèmatiques et les sciences naturelles.[1]

When Mohammed Ali reached Sennar, during his visit to the Sudan in 1839, he welcomed all the sheikhs and notables of the neighbouring district, and, after presenting them with clothes specially made for them, addressed them as follows :

> Know ye that all peoples of other countries were in the beginning of things savages and they have become civilised. You have brains and hands like them ; do as they have done and you will elevate yourselves to the rank of useful men, you will acquire riches and enjoy life as you have never enjoyed it before because of your ignorance. There is nothing that you lack ; you have vast lands, you have animals in plenty and you have timber and wood ; your country is populous, your men strong and your women fertile. What you were lacking was a leader and now you have him in myself. I will lead you to civilisation and happiness. The world is divided into five great parts; the part to which you belong is called Africa. Well, in all parts except here where you live, people know the value of work. They give themselves with enthusiasm to agriculture, industry and commerce, because these lead to wealth, pleasure and glory— words that have no meaning for you. . . . Your country produces practically nothing because the people are lazy and are as good as dead. Learn well this lesson, that work will give everything and without it nothing can be attained.

[1]Foreign Office Records: Turkey (Egypt). Campbell to Palmerston, 8 May 1839.

The audience were at first startled and confused by these revelations, and then spontaneously they all clamoured to be taken to Egypt to learn the arts alluded to. "Very well," said Mohammed Ali, but it will be better if you send your sons; they will adapt themselves better and serve their country longer. Don't worry about them. They will be my adopted sons and when they have completed their studies, I will send them back to you to cover you and their country with honour, happiness and glory."[1]

It was during this visit that Mohammed Ali planned the famous geographical expeditions under Captain Selim, a naval officer, in 1839, 1840 and 1841. Captain Selim was accompanied by a few hundred soldiers with eight armed vessels. The first expedition sailed along with the White Nile as far south as Ghondokro, about latitude 5° north of the Equator. In the two successive expeditions that followed, Captain Selim could not go further south owing to the dangers of navigation. On these occasions Captain Selim had with him the necessary meteorological instruments and his observations were carefully recorded. The European experts who accompanied him made researches into the flora, fauna and social conditions of the districts they travelled across. So that when the expeditions returned to Egypt and its reports were published both in Cairo and Paris, their findings were received with enthusiasm by the scientific world.

It must be remembered that these expeditions took place twenty years before Speke or Grant or any of the other famous explorers of the Dark Continent began their search for the sources of the Nile. Unfortunately, Mohammed Ali did not live long enough to realise his aim of bringing the Nile sources under his control. His immediate successors lost interest, and little or no progress was made in the Sudan, which became a sort of convict station where undesirable persons were exiled.

Said, who visited the Sudan in 1856, tried to put things right; but his efforts after progress were spasmodic and unsustained. The Sudan therefore became more of an ornamental appanage of Egypt than anything else. It was reserved for

[1]Foreign Office Records: Turkey (Egypt). Campbell to Palmerston, 8 May 1839.

Ismail to conceive the grandiose idea of an Egyptian empire in the very heart of Africa. It was in the second half of the nineteenth century, when the call of Africa was as alluring as the call of India had been in the fifteenth century, that Ismail's attention was drawn to the mine of reputed wealth that lay next-door to him. He first set out to enlist the European Powers to his side. This he succeeded in doing by making use of two catchwords which were very popular at that time: "Geographical discovery" and "Anti-slavery." Under the cover of these two transparent veils Ismail pursued a policy of aggrandisement which worked, at least for a time, very smoothly and successfully.

Edward Prince of Wales, while in Egypt as the guest of the Khedive in 1868, reassured the Khedive of the honour that would accrue to Egypt if he were to take on himself the duty of civilising the primitive peoples of the Dark Continent and of stamping out the slave trade. The Khedive snatched at the opportunity suggested by the Prince of Wales, who had coupled his suggestion with a recommendation that the Khedive should engage Sir Samuel Baker as head of his African enterprise.

Baker was one of the famous explorers in the second half of the nineteenth century who, seeing the unknown spots on the map of Africa, had made their way of their own accord or in the name of scientific and geographical societies to search for the sources of the Nile. Grant and Speke were the pioneers who had been sent by the Royal Geographical Society of London to land in Zanzibar, and from thence to travel westwards in search of the sources of the Nile. In 1862 they actually explored the great lake from which the Nile started and to which they gave the name of their illustrious Queen. Baker had come up the Nile straight after them by way of Khartoum, and it was reserved for him to discover Lake Albert in 1864.

It was with this reputation behind him that his name was suggested to the Khedive Ismail, who was shrewd enough to think it worth while pleasing the Prince of Wales by agreeing to the engagement of Sir Samuel. In April 1869 Baker was therefore taken into His Highness's service, and a contract for four years was signed. A great expedition was then organised,



EGYPT AND THE SUDAN
Khedive Ismail's Conquests
Approximate Boundaries
0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700
Miles
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Alexandria
Rafah
Jaghbub Oasis
Siwa Oasis
Cairo
Suez
Aqaba
EGYPT
Kena
El Kossier
Medina
Aswan
Jidda
Mecca
Wadi Halfa
NUBIA
Abu Hamad
Suakin
Dongola
Korti
Berber
THE SUDAN
Shendi
Om Durman
Khartum
Massawa
DARFUR
El Fasher
El Obeid
Sennar
Aden
White Nile
Blue Nile
Lake Tsana
KORDOFAN
Zeila
Berbera
Bahr El Ghazal
Fashoda
Harrar
Sobat
ABYSSINIA
EQUATORIA
SOMALI LAND
Lado
Gondokro
Lake Rudolf
Lake Albert
Lake Choga (Ibrahim)
Lake Edward
Lake Victoria
Kismayu
INDIAN OCEAN

to subjugate under the authority of the Khedive all the lands and countries situated to the south of Ghondokro "considerant que l'humanité propose le devoir de supprimer les chasseurs d'esclaves qui pollulent dans ces contrées."[1]

The expedition was composed of 1,700 men and at Khartoum it was fitted out with thirty boats and two steamships. Baker was promoted to the rank of Pasha, nominated Governor of the Equatorial Provinces, and appointed commander of the expedition, invested by the Khedive with the right of life and death over all its members. Unfortunately the expedition did not meet with unqualified success, nor did it justify the extraordinary expenses incurred, amounting to £800,000. Baker succeeded in proceeding as far south as Lake Albert and in subjugating the neighbouring lands. Missions of submission were received from different quarters, including Uganda. Military and commercial posts were set up three days' march away from each other. But the garrisons sent to guard these posts were not of sufficient strength to overawe the inhabitants, so that they were more often than not in a state of siege. Yet when Baker left the Sudan in 1874 the power of Egypt extended as far south as Ghondokro, which became the capital of the Equatorial Provinces, and was renamed Ismailia in honour of the Khedive.

In 1874 Charles Gordon entered the Khedive's service, and was at first appointed as governor of the Equatorial Provinces. Gordon infused into the service a new spirit of vigour and impetuosity. In less than three years the Egyptian flag was planted beyond the Equator. The name of Ismail became synonymous with law and civilisation. Throughout the new land, stations with powerful and ably commanded garrisons were set up, mainly for the purpose of checking the slave traders who were devastating the land. After this phenomenal success Gordon was appointed Governor-General of the Sudan, Northern and Southern.

It was at this time, in August 1877, that the Egyptian Government, represented by Cherif Pasha as Minister of Foreign Affairs, definitely entered into a treaty with the English Government represented by Vivian, the Consul-General, with a view to suppressing slave trade and salvery in

[1]Sir Samuel Baker, *Ismailia*.

all the dominions ruled by Egypt. It was a humane treaty, but one that cost Egypt dearly.

Gordon was seconded in his efforts by such able officers as the American Chaille-Long, Schnitzer the Austrian (Emin Pasha), and Ibrahim Fawzy the Egyptian. It was Gordon who ordered the resurvey of the Nile sources, and who drew the first map from Khartoum to Lake Victoria. Uganda and Zanzibar were visited by the Egyptians, and their kings paid the greatest deference to the power of the Khedive. Both countries could have easily been annexed to the newly born empire of the Khedive if Britain's policy had not dictated otherwise.

In 1879 Gordon, feeling unable to reconcile the financial and political interests of Europe with the Khedive's welfare, resigned and went home. He was to return again after four years in different circumstances with the Khedive deposed, and the vast country of the Sudan seething with the Mahdist rebellion. On this occasion Gordon was compelled to vacate the country and leave it an easy prey to the Mahdists. Fate then ordained that Gordon should die a noble death without accomplishing his mission.

Meanwhile Ismail was busy reorganising his army. Neither English nor French officers could very well be used for schemes that the Khedive knew would demand wholehearted co-operation. So he determined to spare himself the thankless task of reconciling the jealousies and jarring interests of the two nations by employing neutral soldiers. His choice fell mainly on American officers, then fresh from the battlefields of the Civil War and itching for professional soldiering. The first American officer of note that he engaged was General Stone, whom he appointed Chief of Staff and charged with the arduous task of creating out of chaos an efficient Army Staff, capable of executing the important plans he had in mind. General Stone was helped in his work by more American officers, who soon numbered forty, the most distinguished of them being Loring, William Dye and Chaillè-Long. The school of young Egyptian officers who practised under these capable Americans quickly attained a degree of efficiency that filled the country with pride and admiration. Mukhtar, Wasif, Fawzy and others are names worth mentioning in any modern history of Egypt. And apart from the Army Staff, the

military schools established at Abbassieh, which had been reorganised by able French and Italian officers (assisted by Egyptian officers who had been sent to France to complete their studies), were doing excellent work in turning out efficient subalterns.

Ismail was aware of the stupendous task that lay before the staff officers, and for this reason he gave, unstingtingly, generous donations, enormous but necessary to bring about worth while results. The Minister of War at the time, who was hard working, resourceful and endowed with exceptional vigour, contributed greatly to the immediate success of the Staff. This Minister was no less a person than the Khedive's second son, Prince Hussein Kamel, the future Sultan of Egypt, who had inherited his father's grand ideas. The larger part of the Staff was engaged in explorations and astronomical survey. Some were busy in the preparation of maps for the purposes of taxes and commerce. Some were concerned with roads, railroads, works of irrigation, and schemes for reclaiming agricultural lands from the desert. Others were told off to look after artesian wells and agriculture, salt and oil. The most resourcefull were detailed to open up, develop and civilise the new countries with which they came into contact. For no sooner was the Staff formed then a series of successful expeditions was organised. The first expeditionary work began at home. The whole territory was resurveyed and remapped. Colston and Prout were sent at the head of an expedition to Kordofan, and at about the same time (1874) Purdy and Mason were sent to report on Darfur. Detailed scientific researches and reports were made and published, furnishing the world with trustworthy accounts of hitherto unknown lands.

Among those of the Staff who worked with Gordon was Chaille-Long whose explorations along the Equatorial Nile added lusture to his name. It was he who discovered Lake Ibrahim—a name which Gordon ignored, calling it Lake Choga. His stand against native tribes made his name feared and respected. The Khedive referring once to the exploits of the young officer said: "There is a young soldier who, with two soldiers, has done more in a few days for Egypt than Sir Samuel Baker with an army accomplished in four years."[1]

1 William Dye, *Moslem Epypt and Christian Abyssinia.*

The success of Ismail and his assistants in Central Africa was complete. His authority extended southwards to the Great Lakes. Eastwards it reached Suakin, Mussowah and the Gulf of Aden. Westwards it extended to Bahr El Ghazal and Darfur. Both these districts were annexed just before the entry of Gordon into the service of the Khedive. It was due to the efforts of a former slave trader called Zubeir, who held absolute sway over the western territories, and who in 1869 swore allegiance to the Khedive, that these two districts were conquered in 1874.

Zubeir proved to be a loyal supporter of the Khedive. He was invited to visit Egypt in consequence of a misunderstanding between him and Ayub Pasha, the Governor-General of the Sudan ; he was afforded a princely reception by the Khedive, but was refused permission to return. It was Zubeir whom Gordon wanted with him on his sinister mission to Khartoum in 1884, but the authorities refused to comply with his request. Zubeir's son succeeded him as governor of Bahr El Ghazal, but later involved himself in trouble with the authorities at Khartoum and was killed in battle.

But suddenly it dawned upon Ismail that to be master of Central and Equatorial Africa it was not enough for him to dominate the Nile and the neighbouring provinces. He was reminded that the natural trade route to and from the Great Lakes was via the Indian Ocean rather than the Nile, which could not be navigated beyond Fashoda. Further, nothing that a good part of the ivory trade from Africa to Egypt had already been suspended or diverted from the Nile route, he determined to recover some of the lost trade by opening a new route.

An expedition under McKillop Pasha and Chaille-Long was therefore sent out in search of a suitable harbour on the coast. The mouth of the Juba River was first chosen, but the anchorage was poor and so the expedition went further south, encroaching on the territorial rights of the Sultan of Zanzibar. In some places the flag of the Sultan was pulled down and the Khedival flag run up in its place. Complaints reached the British Government, which remonstrated with the Khedive. As a result, the expeditition was recalled and all the Somali

ports were evacuated except Zeila, which the Khedive had bought from Turkey in 1875.

Meanwhile, in Harrar, a neighbouring quarter further north, the Egyptians were establishing a government and introducing the first rudiments of civilisation in a way that redounded to the honour of Egypt and its ruler.

The conquest of Harrar was entrusted to Raouf Pasha in 1875. The people and their chiefs came and offered their submission, but the tribe of the Gallas—a people who lived by despoiling the country—opposed the Egyptians. Reinforcements were sent under Abdul Kader, Nadi and Mukhtar. Raouf soon proved his superiority over the Gallas and began the work of bringing law and order to the country. This, as was the rule, consisted in establishing the security of persons and property, and in building a government house, a barracks, a hospital and a mosque. Raouf, we are told by Dr. Paulitschke, a Polish general, became so popular that the people referred to him by the name of Father. Nadi, who succeeded Raouf in 1878, also proved to be an exellent governor. He organised a police force and encouraged industry and agriculture.

In 1884, however, owing to the exigencies of the political situation, the Egyptian force was recalled from Harrar, and the country again relapsed into anarchy. The work of the Egyptians there forms a brilliant chapter in modern Egyptian history. They introduced cotton and sugar plantations, fruits of all kinds, farming, cattle rearing and vegetable production. Slavery was abolished and money introduced. In ten years the population nearly doubled itself, and the number of carvans rose from seventy to eight hundred.

"The general impression left by the Egyptian troops," said Paulitschke (who was an eyewitness), "might be summed up in a couple of words 'bravoure et maintien de l'ordre.' "[1]

For Egypt, her conquests in Africa were a leap in the dark. The Powers were at first caught napping; but when Ismail's splendid success at last roused Europe, and when England raised an admonishing finger, Ismail had to draw the line, and soon afterwards began the disruption of Egypt's African empire.

1 P. Paulitschke, *Geographical Journal*, 1881, "Le Harrar."

The expansion of Egypt along the Eastern coast of Africa was bound to bring on complications between Abyssinia and Egypt. The ports of Zeila, Suakin and Mussowah, transferred by the Sultan to the dominions of the Khedive, entirely cut off Abyssinia from the sea and the commerce of the world. Again, the Khedive sought to develop his outlying provinces by encouraging commerce with the neighbouring tribes under the suzerainty of the King of Abyssinia. The latter had long felt the pressure of Egyptian commercial and colonial penetration. A tention in their relations soon became unavoidable after the appointment of Munzinger—a Swiss who had previously acted in Bogos as consul for both England and France —as governor of Mussowah.

The King of Abyssinia realized that the Egyptian menace was coming nearer home. He sent envoys to England, imploring assistance against the Mohammedan invasion. England, who had herself waged war against Abyssinia a few years before, had her reasons for siding with Ismail. But France, incensed against both Ismail and England because of the sale of the Khedive's Suez Canal shares in 1875, openly sent arms and ammunitions to Abyssinia. At that time the Khedive badly need to retrieve his damaged reputation, so the first Abyssinian expedition was prepared. Arendrup, a Danish artillery officer in the Khedive's service, was at its head. Durholz, Ruchdy and Arakil Nubar were prominent members of the expedition. A force consisting of 2,500 men set off in October 1875. When Arendrup reached Asmara, King John of Abyssinia had assembled an army of 30,000 men. A precipitate battle took place at Gundet on the left bank of River Mareb, where the Egyptians were defeated by sheer weight of numbers. A dreadful carnage followed. The frenzy of the Abyssinians knew no bounds. They massacred, mutilated and revelled in blood. A very small force, under Ruchdy, retreated to Mussowah; but the expedition as a whole was slaughtered on the battlefield.

The news of Arendrup's disaster was kept a state secret until the lost ground could be recovered. If the news had then been published, the Khedive's position would have been ruined both financially and politically. For this reason a great expedition of over 16,C00 men was ordered to be ready without delay.

Prince Hussein and General Stone rose to the occasion, and work feverishly for the organisation of the force. Unfortunately, the serious rivalry that existed between the Army Staff and the old Circassian officers made itself felt and seriously endangered the morale of the army as a whole. At last, to satisfy the conservative element, Ratib Pasha was made Commander and General Loring his Chief of Staff. "The principal object of the expedition," said the Khedive in his farewell address, "was to regain in the Sudan, as well as in Europe, prestige lost in the late campaign. To accomplish this it would be necessary to defeat the King in battle." Prince Hassan, third son of the Khedive, who had been trained in the Prussian Army, joined the expedition as Mussowah. The expedition came in contact with the enemy at Gura, and a three-day battle ensued in which the casualties of the Egyptians amounted to 4,000 at least. But the enemy suffered very heavy losses and was forced to retreat. Nevertheless, the Khedive's plans were not carried out for several reasons. First there was no unity of command: Ratib, Loring, and Prince Hassan each had a word to say. Loring, the Chief of Staff, had no former experience of directing armies; Ratib, was much concerned about the safety of the Prince and lacked the drive necessary for an invading general.

The Khedive therefore instructed Ratib to conclude peace upon the best possible terms. The Abyssinian War was the first check experience by the Khedive in his African campaign. The American officers who formed the majority of the Staff and therefore incurred most of the odium of the defeat were discountenanced and shortly afterwards dispensed with, in accordance with the rules of economy recommended by the international commission of inquiry formed to inquire into the financial state of the country.

But this short account of the activities of the army under Ismail ought not to end on a note of defeat. His exploits in Crete in 1865 and in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877—with 30,000 Egyptian troops under Prince Hassan participating—deserve mentioning. There the Egyptians acquitted themselves most creditably. The dispatch of Egyptian Sudanese battalions to Mexico in 1862-6 in response to the call of the unfortunate Archduke Maximilian was a generous act, and

the motives that prompted it were noble and chivalrous enough.

The story of the Egyptians in the Sudan is not yet complete. It will be continued in a later chapter dealing with the reconquest of the Sudan.

Chapter X

ABDICATION

FALLEN monarchs have often been rewarded by public calumny and ingratitude. Their loss of power breaks the spell of divinity that once heldged them; their mistakes suddenly grow at the expense of their services; and often it happens that a little evil obscures a great good. The case of Khedive Ismail was no exception to the rule. Few princes were subjected during their lifetime to a more damaging or crooked criticism. The campaign of distortion and insult, once started, went on and pursued the unfortunate ruler even to his grave.

Yet there was a time when Khedive Ismail was the spoilt darling of Europe, when his detractors were his adulators, when all sang the praises of his genius and blessed the golden age he had inaugurated. What, then, was the reason for their change of tune?

The explanation is not difficult to find. The clue to it lies in a significant statement made by Disraeli in the House of Commons on 23 March 1876. There he announced that the Khedive had requested that Sir Stephen Cave's Report on the finances of Egypt should not be published. It was generally understood that the Khedive's objection was due to the precarious state of Egyptian finances. Disraeli's statement fell like a thunderbolt on the investors, convincing them of Ismail's probable insolvency. Hitherto they had been led to believe that Ismail's faculty of borrowing was unlimited and that the resources of Egypt were inexhaustible. But now Ismail's credit had been weighed in the balance and found wanting. He could no longer feed the hungry appetites of those who had made up their minds to grow fat at his expense. So long as Ismail borrowed, treated, amused, and paid the bills, he was enthusiastically praised; but when his power of borrowing had to be curbed and when the possibility of his

not paying the whole bill, or even of not paying it at all, became apparent, he was shamefully traduced.

Hence the change of tune. Ismail before 1875 was held in high esteem by the European public and the Powers. Ismail after 1875 earned for himself the ill will of the investors and the dissatisfaction of their governments.

It was certainly deplorable that the Khedive should have given himself up so recklessly to the policy of contracting loans and of keeping up appearances, although he knew of the gradual deterioration of his finances. No doubt he was always hoping, as debtors always do, that he would recuperate and be able to pay up in the end. But for him a safer and better policy would have been to restrict his expenditure to a minimum to *depend exclusively* on what Egypt could give him ; and instead of *hopelessly trying* to patch up the finances of the country, to declare the absolute truth about them and abide by any arrangement the creditors were able to arrive at. In fact, he should have faced the situation boldly, frankly and honourably. For neither he nor Egypt was the first debtor to Europe, nor would either have been the first to declare insolvency. France after the great revolution, Austria after the revolution of 1848, Portugal, Greece and Turkey, had been in analogous positions, and the creditors had had to make sacrifices. But Ismail's pride and bad advisers were his undoing. They persuaded him that a declaration of bankruptcy would be dishonourable to Egypt and the Great Khedive. He therefore kept up appearances and continued to borrow and spend.

More than once after 1876 the Khedive tried to retrieve the situation. He accepted constitutionalism and sacrificed a great part of the family's property ; the Princes even sold their jewels. But it was of no avail. The Chancelleries of Europe had become hostile to him. The Shylocks wanted their pound in full and would not forgo one jot of it, though the interest they had already received on their investments must have exceeded half their original capital. The creditors, who happened to be influential persons both in France and in England, became clamorous. The two governments therefore decided to interfere : the financial and political crash soon followed.

Both Mohammed Ali and Abbas never spent beyond what they could collect from Egypt. Neither of them resorted to foreign loans, and Abbas must have left a good surplus of money to his successor. Said, however, needed money to meet his engagements to the Suez Canal Company, and for this reason he effected the first foreign loan of £3,242,800. After Said's death, Ismail issued an inventory of the sum total of Said's liabilities, which amounted to £14,000,000, including the cost of the Suez Canal shares.

The first years of Ismail's reign witnessed an extraordinary flow of wealth, owing to the Civil War and the abolition of slavery in the United States of America, but they also witnessed a cattle murrain that would have paralysed agricultural work in Egypt had not the Government come to the relief of the fellah. The importation of cattle and machinery alone cost the Government £5,000,000. Then came the award of Napoleon III in the Suez Canal affair which amounted to over £3,000,000 Ismail's endeavours to embellish Cairo and to consolidate his position in Egypt by paying Turkey off necessitated a loan of £11,890,000 in 1868.

Matters could have stopped here without occasioning any serious financial distress if it had not been for the rapidly increasing expenditure of the Government and the Khedive. First there was a large army to be maintained for carrying out the Khedive's plans in Africa; the tribute to Turkey was more than doubled; the stone and mortar mania of the Khedive knew no limits; and the inaugural ceremony of the Canal must have cost him over £1,000,000. Moreover, his own personal tastes became more and more extravagant. His were not the expenses but rather the excesses of a prince who in full orientalism wished to emulate and even surpass the West. He thirsted for power ; he wanted an empire and a grand capital; he wanted everything that would bring him up to the level of the great European monarchs. The magnificence in which he lived was something unprecedented even in Europe.

To maintain all this, the resources of Egypt alone were not sufficient. A series of foreign loans at excessive rates became necessary, though for a time the Franco-Prussian War closed the French bourse and hindered the Khedive from applying to Europe for capital. At this period, the Egyptian State Debt

and the floating debt of both Government and Khedive consisted to a great extent of obligations towards foreign agents. In fact, public loans were contracted mostly with foreigners; and the State Debt was therefore, on the whole, an external and not an internal debt, as is the case in highly civilised countries. It was only recently, in 1943, that the Egyptian Government transformed the Egyptian debt into a truly national debt.

In 1871, with the Franco-Prussian War still on, the Khedive was forced to appeal to the landed gentry for contributions of money. It was at this stage that Ismail Saddyk, the Khedive's confidant and Minister of Finance, took measures that were to contribute largely to Ismail's downfall. Ismail Saddyk, widely known in Egypt as Al Mufattish (the Inspector), was certainly Ismail's evil genius, and to him more than to any other person must be ascribed the financial disaster that clouded Ismail's last days. Al Mufattish had enjoyed the privileged position of being his master's confidant and bosom friend long before Ismail became heir apparent. He had acted as his estate agent, and when his master came to the throne he was promoted to the post of Inspector-General. In 1869 he became Minister of Finance, and was practically the *alter ego* of the Khedive. Being partly of fellah origin himself, he understood better than any other person the artifices of the Egyptian fellaheen; he was therefore able to be particularly exacting and ruthless in his treatment of them. The methods he adopted especially in his later days, for raising the sums necessary to pay the notorious dividends were as disastrous as they were temporarily successful.

In 1871 the resourceful minister of finance issued the Mukabala loan. At first it was voluntary, but in 1874 it became compulsory. The Mukabala loan amounted to the payment of six times the annual land tax in return for a perpetual reduction of one-half of the tax. It was pronounced by all the authorities as a ruinous financial device, which sacrificed half the main revenue of the land in return for a temporary palliative of about £2,500,000 yearly.

The pressing needs of the Khedive were far from being met by the Mukabala loan. By 1873, the same year in which the Khedive secured from the Porte the famous firman granting

him full autonomy, there had accumulated a floating debt of £26,000,000. Messrs. Oppenheim were approached, and they proceeded to draw up a plan for funding the whole debt in a 7 per cent. loan of £32,000,000. This operation proved most disastrous. Suffice it to say that the Treasury actually received not more than £11,740,077 in cash and £9,000,000 in bonds of the floating debt! No wonder therefore that Cave stated in his report in 1875 that, out of loans amounting to £55,887,000, the Egyptian Exchequer had received only £35,000,000, and that at the end of 1875 the Government had already repaid £29,570,000 in interest and in sinking funds.

In November 1875, the financial situation wore a most ominious look. There was talk that the Khedive ought to follow in the steps of his suzerain, the Sultan, and suspended payment by declaring his insolvency. For as a result of the firman of 1873, loans that had hitherto been the personal liability of the Khedive were at once turned into State debts. It was demonstrated to him, however, by the representatives of the Powers that such a step was out of the question, and that Egypt was not a sovereign Powers. The mere rumour of the proposed solution terrified the creditors, and made further recourse to credit impossible. The Khedive was therefore forced to open negotiations with French bankers for the creation of Treasury Bonds guaranteed by the 176,602 shares held by the Government in the Suez Canal. But Decazes, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, was slow in moving and made no sign of accommodating the Khedive. The French Government was evidently absorbed in questions of domestic policy. Lord Derby, the English Foreign Secretary, who had got wind of the proposed selling of the Khedive's shares, made it clear to the French Ambassador in London that the English Government "would do all that was possible 'pour ne pas laisser monopoliser dans des mains etrangeres une affaire dont dependent nos premiers interets.'" In less than a week, thanks to Beaconsfield's peremptory measures, the house of Rothschild was commissioned to effect the purchase of the Canal shares. On November 26 the Khedive received the welcome news that the British Government had agreed to buy the shares for £4,000,000, payable immediately, in drafts at sight on the

house of Rothschild. Disraeli's action was ratified by Parliament. More English shareholders set in the administrative council of the Suez Canal Company and formed about one-third of the whole number.

The purchase of the Khedive's shares by England marked the beginning of the decline of French influence in Egypt—a change that was perceptible even after the fall of the Empire. England on the other hand, dominated the situation. Well might M. de Mazade say: "L'acte est tout politique. Si ce n'est pas une prise de possession territoriale de l'Egypte, c'en est un premier pas. L'Angleterre ne peut plus abandonner son client."[1]

The £3,976,583 (to be exact) which was received for the Canal shares relieved the situation for some time. It staved off the crisis. The Khedive now became anxious to alleviate the financial situation, however indifferent he might have been in the beginning. He decided to introduce reforms into his finances, and requested the British Government to lend him to Treasury officials. England replied by sending the Right Hon. Stephen Cave. M. P., to investigate and report on the whole financial situation. He arrived at Cairo in December 1875, and the rumour spread that England would take over all the liabilities of the Khedive or at least guarantee his debts. Cave produced a masterly report on the situation. "Egypt," said he, suffers from the ignorance, dishonesty, waste, and extravagance of the East, and at the same time, from the vast expenses caused by hasty, inconsiderate endeavours to adopt the civilisation of the West. Immense sums are expended on unproductive works, or on productive works carried out in the wrong way or too soon." In conclusion, Cave suggested the institution of a Control Department with an English official at its head, and recommended that no more loans should be made without the consent of the Control. The resources of Egypt, said Cave, were sufficient if properly managed to meet her liabilities.

Harmless as Cave's report was it nevertheless created a good deal of harm, and this harm was enhanced by Britain's refusal to lend a commissioner to carry out the proposed reforms. Hope soon gave way to despair. The efforts of the Mufattish

[1]*La Revue des deux Mondes,* 1 December 1875.

to squeeze money out of the fellaheen were useless. Disraeli's speech in the House of Commons on the state of Egyptian finances made things worse, Desraeli having stated that he was willing to publish Cave's report, but that the Khedive had the strongest objection to such a procedure. In consequence, Egyptian stock slumped heavily. "Ils ont creuses ma fosse," was the Khedive's comment when he heard of Disraeli's announcement in the Commons.

This was the first inkling of the crash. Cave's inquiry and report were the crevices through which later poured the flood of European intervention in the internal affairs of the country. The immediate result was the temporary suspension of payment by a decree issued by Ismail on 18 April 1876. An arrangement was hurriedly made with the French creditors to unify the founded debt, but England protested and the scheme collapsed. At last the creditors in England elected Mr. Goschen, M. P., a former member of Gladstone's cabinet, to represent their interests and come to an arrangement with the Khedive. The French creditors elected M. Joubert. The Goschen-Joubert mission started a new inquiry, and made a settlement unifying the funded debt to the amount of £59,000,000 at 6 per cent. interest redeemable in sixty-three years. A separate Daira debt of £8,815,000 was set aside embodying the debts incurred by the Khedive's own estates. A preference debt of £17,000,000 at 5 per cent. interest was also set apart.

As a guarantee of the good working of the scheme, Controllers-General were to be appointed, one an Englishman at the head of the Revenue Office, and the other a Frenchman, at the head of an Audit Office. A special department, to be called the Caisse de la Dette, with representatives from the different Powers to see to the service of the debt, was created in 1876. France, Italy, Austria and Russia had each nominated a member. England hesitated at first, and then Major Baring, afterwards Lord Cromer, was appointed the representative of British creditors. Yielding to the diplomatic pressure exerted by the bondholders, the Khedive appointed as controllers Mr. Romaine and M. de Malaret, to be followed by other European officials. Egyptian officials were dismissed and Europeans drawing high salaries filled important posts.

The revenue of the most important provinces was to go straight into the coffers of the Caisse de la Dette, and, according to the decree establishing the Caisse, the Government had no right to contract new loans or in any way modify the existing fiscal conditions without its consent.

Under the pressure of the debt the burden of taxation fell heavily on the fellaheen, and in 1877-8 things became serious because of a low Nile and the Russo-Turkish war, in which an Egyptian force co-operated with Turkey. So long as the old regime continued the Mufattish remained in power, but when the financial crash came in 1876 and Joubert and Goschen arrlved to investigate matters on the spot, Saddyk was more or less on his trial.

It was then that Ismail Saddyk met with his mysterious fate. From the outset he was held mainly responsible for the financial trouble, and so they refused to deal with him. And no sooner were Saddyk's accounts examined than glaring irregularities were brought to the notice of the Khedive. Discrepancies, false accounts and evident suppressions of sources of revenue were discovered. Ismail Saddyk tried to save his face by playing the patroit. He spoke of giving out the secrets of the Khedive ; he denounced this interference by foreigners, causing public opinion to turn against them, and incited the Khedive to disregard the recommendations of Messrs. Joubert and Goschen. These two men naturally complained to the Khedive who, when the ruinous disclosures were made known to him, decided to take peremtory measures to have done with the archauthor of the crash. Ismail was never encumbered by an excessive attachment to anyone ; and so, when his mind was made up, he found no difficulty in ridding himself of the Mufattish. What the precise methods used by the Khedive were remains a mystery. The official notice gave out that Saddyk had been charged with conspiring against the Khedive, arrested and tried by night by the Privy Council, found guilty and sent to Dongola. A month later his official death was announced, and his property worth £3,000,000 was confiscated.

Thus passed away the evil genius who had exerted the greatest influence over the Khedive. He was an eastern Wolsey, who ruled the country with a rod of iron. His fate was that specially reserved for those who would suddenly rise

to giddy heights where the air is too rarefied for ordinary human beings to breathe for long.

On 12 July 1877 the British Consul-General wrote that Egypt had punctually paid her tribute and met her financial engagements, inspite of the war she had on her hands. Egypt was then paying 66 per cent. of its revenues on its national debt. Yet he was afraid that these prompt payments had been made at the expense of ruinous sacrifices to the peasantry. "Englishmen," he said, "were incurring a serious responsibility." A crisis soon became imminent.

The foreign colony believed that the Khedive was dodging payment, that he and Egypt had hidden treasures, and could pay the ruinous interest to the last farthing if they wanted to. The mixed tribunals gave judgments in favour of creditors against the Khedive ; but these were not enforced, and the judges had to protest formally to the Consuls. At Alexandria the behaviour of the creditors became unrestrained. They issued a weekly sheet which they filled with abusive comments. The Bourse at Alexandria pulled down the picture of the Khedive, and the foreign merchants at Alexandria insolently addressed a petition to the Consuls in which they said that they were being despoiled "par les systemes de fraude et de mensonge que le Viceroi d'Egypte poursuit depuis quelque temps avec une obstination revoltante."[2] Vivian, the English Consul, simply declined to support the petition, and ignored it altogether.

The Khedive became uneasy at the strong expression of foreign public opinion both in Egypt and abroad. A Commission of Inquiry was therefore formed by a decree dated January 1878. The Commissioners of the Public Debt and the European Controllers took part in the Commission. De Lesseps was chosen as president but Sir Rivers Wilson and Riad Pasha were both nominated vice-presidents. De Lesseps soon departed for France, leaving the Commission entirely in the hands of the British representatives, Rivers Wilson and Captain Baring. Both these men were actuated by sentiments entirely antagonistic to the Khedive. In this antagonism were the first seeds of disunion between Ismail and the Commis-

1 Parliamentary Papers, Vivian to Derby, 12 July 1877.

2 Ibid., Vivian to Derby, 8 February 1878.

sioners, and the inquiry proceeded under very ominous conditions.

At first the Commission was empowered to investigate all matters connected with the revenue, but by a later decree its powers were extended to comprise all sources of revenue and expenditure. All officials and documents were to be at the disposal of the inquirers. It was now that the Commission called upon Cherif Pasha, who was Minister of Justice and Foreign Affairs, to appear, but he told them he was willing to send his answer in writing. The Commission considered his refusal to appear as an insult, while Cherif regarded an appearance before them as a national humiliation which he would never tolerate. He therefore snapped his fingers at them and resigned his office, thus preparing the way for his rival Nubar who was in Europe at that time in disfavour.

The first findings of the Commission were a severe indictment of Ismail's personal government in Egypt, and a statement that the only possible solution lay in the limitation of the absolute power which the Khedive had hitherto wielded. Investigations led to the detection of a new deficit of about £9,000,000, and the commissioners proposed a sacrifice to be made by the Khedive and his family of a part of their property.

The Khedive accepted without reserve or condition all the conclusions of the Commission of Inquiry. "Mon pays," said the Khedive addressing Sir Rivers Wilson on August 23, "n'est plus en Afrique; nous faisons partie de l'Europe actuellement. Il est donc naturel pour nous d'abandonner les errements anciens pour adopter un systeme nouveau adopte a notre etat social. Je crois que dans un avenir peu eloigne vous verrez des changements considerables." As a guarantee of his good faith he addressed a Khedival order to Nubar on August 28 authorising him to form a Ministry. In his letter the Khedive asserted the principle of ministerial responsibility for the first time in modern Egypt: "Dorenavant," the Khedive said, "je veux gouverner avec et par mon conseil des Ministres. Les membres du Conseils des Ministres devront etre tous solidaires les uns des autres; ce point est essentiel." Decisions on questions brought before the Council of Ministers were to be made by the majority; and nominations of high officials

were to be proposed to the Khedive by the Council, whose advice was to be acted upon.

This arrangement might have had a healthy influence on Egyptian government if it had not been for the preponderance of European influence in a purely domestic affair. For Nubar proposed the appointment of two European ministers to this first responsible Ministry of Modern Egypt: Sir Rivers Wilson as Minister of Finance and De Blignieres as Minister of Public Works; and Ismail was obliged to accept them.

The Nubar Ministry reflected all the elements of future discord and trouble. Nubar, supported by the European governments, was always at variance with the Khedive; Sir Rivers Wilson was most exacting; and the European Ministry, as it was called by Egyptians, was most obnoxious to national sentiment. No wonder therefore that there was a fermentation of national feeling in the country. Complaints against the Ministry poured in from all sides. Discontent and indignation were rife everywhere, and especially among the enlightened classes. Nationalist meetings began to be held, secretly at first and then openly, to protest against the Ministry.

On 18 February 1879 a serious military riot broke out in Cairo in consequence of reductions made in the army, by which about 2,500 officers were put on half-pay, without receiving the arrears due to them. About a hundred armed officers, followed by the crowd and a number of soldiers, assembled in a state of turmoil near the Ministry of Finance. When they saw Nubar driving into the Ministry, they surrounded his cab and insulted and rough-handled him. Presently Sir Rivers Wilson came along, and when he saw what was happening to Nubar came to his rescue; but the crowd stopped him, clutched him by his beard and shut him up with Nubar and Riad in a room in the upper storey of the Ministry. The officers then occupied the Ministry building and threatened the European officials.

When the Consuls heard of what had happened they approached the Khedive, who at once arrived at the Ministry. His appearance was enough to inspire fear and respect in the hearts of the rioters. "If you are my officers," said the Khedive, "you are bound by your oath to obey me; if you refuse, I will have you swept away." They obeyed, but with some reluctance

and murmuring. Then he ordered them to disperse, and when they refused to do so, he ordered his troops to fire into the air. A few people were wounded, but order was restored, and the Ministers were released from the room in which they were confined.

The Khedive's behaviour throughout the affair was above reproach, and the Consuls-General unanimously agreed to compliment him on his conduct. The Khedive, however, seized the opportunity of telling them to inform their governments that he could no longer retain his position of responsibility without power or authority. Vivian, in fact, strongly recommended to his government that the Khedive should be allowed to share in the councils of his ministers, so that they might hold him responsible. But Vivian was at variance with the views held by Rivers Wilson, who was supported by the Government at home. Vivian saw clearly into the reality of the situation, and was convinced that the Khedive was still a power that counted. He was therefore anxious to keep this power on the side of order. Sir Rivers Wilson, on the other hand, belonged to that rigid class of officials peculiar to the Treasury, and his conception of the East and of the Eastern environment was at fault. He therefore insisted that the Khedive should be left absolutely powerless, just as constitutional monarchs were elsewhere.

When Nubar was asked if he could guarantee public order in the event of his remaining in power, he answered in the negative. Nubar had therefore to send in his resignation, which was gladly accepted by the Khedive. The European ministers, however, insisted on keeping their functions. Rather than have Nubar back again, Ismail agreed to accept any limitation that would satisfy the Powers. The two Powers then asked that the European ministers should be given the power to veto any decision agreed upon by the other ministers. Prince Tewfik, the Crown Prince, was appointed President of the Council, and the new ministry was formed in March 1879, very much on the lines suggested by Ismail. The Khedive had won a point by dismissing Nubar; but he was still kept away from the Council of Ministers, Sir Rivers Wilson monopolised all the power in the Ministry to himself, and Prince Tewfik, the president, was totally ignored.

A new financial arrangement was being prepared by Wilson which amounted to a declaration of bankruptcy, and was denounced by the Khedive as a dishonour to the country. A national movement against Europeans in the Ministry was again started, and petitions were submitted to the Khedive for the formation of a national ministry responsible to the Chamber of Deputies.

This Chamber owes its origin to the decree of November 1866, issued by Khedive Ismail to ensure for Egypt a semblance of the constitutional government which was in vogue in Europe at the time. Needless to say, the Chamber, which assembled for one month in the year, was a purely consultative body, and the Khedive was in reality the all-powerful authority in the country. But gradually the members won experience and began to realise their rights, as a result of the intellectual movements that marked the latter part of Ismail's reign. During the reign of Ismail several daily and weekly papers were brought out by Syrian and Lebanese writers who had fled from their country to escape Abdul Hamid's despotism. Towards the end of Ismail's reign the deputies were able to raise their voice, and question the Ministers on different questions regarding the finances of the country.

Their tone became very threatening when Sir Rivers Wilson refused to appear before them and answer their questions. At heart the European ministers considered themselves responsible only to their own governments, and they knew that neither the Khedive nor the Chamber could limit their independence of thought or action. The European ministers therefore expressed their wish that the Chamber should be dissolved after it had completed its term of three years. When Riad Pasha, the Minister of the Interior, appeared before the Chamber on 27 March 1879, to read the decree of its dissolution, he was met by a general protest. The members openly refused to leave their seats until they had completed their study of the projects and proposals before them. The eventually left the Chamber, and the Nationalist movement, which was supported by the Khedive, assumed a menacing aspect.

Ex-ministers, members of the Chamber, ulemas, officers and notables were meeting regularly to coerce the Ministry into

resigning, and to form a really national ministry ready to safeguard the interest of the people and salvage the prestige of the country. For it had been circulated that Sir Rivers Wilson was about to issue a statement declaring the Government insolvent and abolishing the law of the Mukabala, which would seriously harm the landed proprietors. At the head of the national movement were men like Cherif Pasha, the former minister who had defied the Commissioners, and resigned his post when asked to appear before the Commission. Cherif's honesty and integrity of character, together with his liberal and national leanings, endeared him to the rising Nationalist party, and pointed him out as the man to lead his country.

Backed by this strong national movement, Ismail felt powerful enough at last to defy both the French and the English and to effect his *coup d'etat*. In April 1879, less than a month after the formation of the new Cabinet, the Khedive summoned the Consuls-General, and told them that as great discontent existed among all classes of the people, he had decided to take a new step in conformity with the decisions of the National Assembly. Egypt, said the Khedive, would not be declared bankrupt : the resources of the country could not possibly justify such a measure. Egypt would meet all its obligations. He then accepted the resignation of Prince Tewfik and without further hesitation charged Cherif to form a Cabinet. In his letter to Cherif the Khedive said : "Comme chef d'Etat et comme Egyptien, je considere un devoir sacre pour moi, de suivre l'opinion de mon pays et de donner une satisfaction entiere a ses legitimes aspirations." The letter went on to state that the financial project prepared by the Minister of Finance, in which the country was to be declared bankrupt and the welfare of the farmers neglected by the abolition of the law of the Mukabala, had aroused public feeling to a dangerous pitch. For this reason he accepted the resignation of the Ministry, and charged Cherif Pasha to form a new Cabinet on the basis of the decree of 28 August 1878, establishing the responsibility of the Ministry in power.

This was tantamount to a dismissal of the foreign ministers. They formally protested, and three days later the Commission of Inquiry sent in their resignation accompanied by a full

report, the chief finding of which was that Egypt had been practically in a state of bankruptcy since 1876.

Cherif's ministry set out to reconcile the creditors and Europe in general. He offered to establish the Anglo-French control, but England and France refused. The tone of the Chancelleries became threatening. Both Waddington and Salisbury, the French and English Ministers of Foreign Affairs, wrote:

> The Khedive is well aware that the considerations which compel Her Majesty's Government to take an interest in the destinies of Egypt have led them to pursue no other policy than that of developing the resources and securing the good government of the country.
>
> They have hitherto considered the independence of the Khedive and the maintenance of his dynasty as important conditions for the attainment of these ends. But if the Khedive continues to ignore the obligations imposed upon him by his past acts and assurances, and persists in declining the assistance of European ministers, we must conclude that he deliberately renounces all pretension to their friendships. In such a case, it will only remain for the two Cabinets to reserve to themselves an entire liberty of appreciation and action in defending their interests in Egypt, and in seeking the arrangements best calculated to secure the good government and prosperity of the country.[1]

Ismail would not give way. He had defied England and France, but in doing so he had counted without Germany and Bismarck. It was reserved for Germany to take the final step that spurred on England and France to decisive action. The promulgation by the Khedive on April 22 of the financial arrangement opposed to the project of the Commission, without taking counsel with the Powers, decided Germany to intervene, though hitherto she had abstained from intervention, "confidently leaving the defence of general European interest, with which those of Germany were identified, to the friendly Powers most interested." She had associated herself with Austria, whom she left to appoint a commissioner and to act in concert with the other Powers. Suddenly, on May 11, Count

[1] Parliamentary Papers, Salisbury to Lascelles, 5 April 1879.

Munster, the German Ambassador in London, communicated to Lord Salisbury that "in face of a measure by which the Egyptian Government directly and in the most reckless manner violates international agreements, the Imperial Government feels itself bound to decide without delay on the steps necessary for the defence of her sorely endangered interests, of the Reform Courts, and of the subjects of the Empire, and to take a firm p sition in opposition to the arbitrary proceedings of the Viceroy."[1] It was believed by some that it was Nubar who, hated by France, insulted by the Khedive, and abandoned by England, had sought refuge with Bismarck in order to avenge himself. However this may be, the German Consul-General was instructed to notify the Khedive that "the Imperial Government looks upon the decree of April 22, by which the Egyptian Government regulate at their own will the matters relating to the debt, thereby abolishing existing and recognised rights, as an open and direct violation of international engagements . . . that it must declare the Decree to be devoid of any legally binding effect . . . and must hold the Viceroy responsible for all the consequences of this unlawful proceeding."[2]

England and France soon followed suit, and so did Russia, while Italy protested orally. On June 19 England and France, in their desire to surpass Germany, formally advised the Khedive to abdicate:

> Should your Highness follow this advice, our governments will act in concert in order that a suitable Civil List should be assigned to you and that the order of succession in virtue of which Prince Tewfik will succeed Your Highness should not be disturbed . . . . If you refuse to abdicate, and if you compel the Cabinets of London and Paris to address themselves directly to the Sultan, you will not be able to count either upon obtaining the Civil List or upon the succession of Prince Tewfik.

This threat played on the fear that the Sultan might ignore Tewfik and proclaim as Khedive Abdul Halim, the eldest living prince of the dynasty, in conformity with the old law

[1] Parliamentary Papers, Munster to Salisbury, 11 May 1879.

[2] Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, i, 135.

of succession. In order to implement the new policy, France was inconsiderate enough to send out M. Tricou, an unpleasant consul who had been removed once from Egypt at the direct request of the Khedive himself. Lord Vivian too had been recalled and Lascelles was left in charge of the British Consulate. Lord Salisbury, in his message directing Lascelles to recommend the Prince to abdicate, gave a lucid exposition of the late events and of England's policy towards Egypt:

> If Egypt were a country in whose past history the Powers had no share and to whose future destiny it was possible for them to be indifferent, their wisest course would be to renounce at this point all further concern with the relations between the Egyptian ruler and his subjects. But to England at least this policy is impossible. The English Government is bound by duty and interest to do all that lies in their power to arrest mismanagement . . . . The sole obstacle to reform appears to be in the character of the ruler. His financial embarrassments lead almost inevitably to oppression and his bad faith frustrates all friendly efforts to apply a remedy. There seems to be no doubt that a change of policy can only be obtained by a change of ruler.[1]

The Khedive listened gravely to the communication of the Consuls and then told them that he would consider the matter and perhaps refer it to the Sultan. England and France thereupon instructed their Ambassadors at Constantinople to prevent the Porte from giving way to the Khedive, who had sent a special envoy to try and enlist the Sultan on his side. The two Powers were careful not to arouse any international jealousy by overriding the Sultan and deposing Ismail by force. Turkey, for its part, welcomed the opportunity of using her suzerainty over Egypt to humiliate the ambitious Khedive.

On 24 June 1879, news reached the Consuls that the Sultan had decided to depose Ismail. Although it was midnight, they went to the Palace and asked for an interview with the Khedive. The presence at this hour of the Consuls, accompanied by Cherif Pasha, caused some fear and confusion in the Palace. However, the Khedive agreed to receive them, and

[1] Parliamentary Papers, Salisbury to Lascelles, 16 June 1879.

when they told him of the Sultan's decision and of their desire that he should abdicate before it became necessary to depose him, he remained perfectly firm in his resolve not to do anything before he had personally received the Sultan's advice. "But you have acted twenty times in defiance of the Sultan," put in the officious French Consul Tricou. "I defy you to name one instance," answered the Khedive. As Tricou's memory failed him at this critical moment, Lascelles came to the rescue of his colleague. "But, Your Highness, would it not be well to show some independence of Constantinople, since the Porte may deceive you?" "Seeing, my dear sir, that the first use you wish to make of my independence is to abdicate all my power, I hardly see the advantage to be gained," retorted the Khedive. Lascelles was silent, and the Consuls had to go.

The next day, June 25, there was a commotion in military circles. People talked of a big army and of the inundation of the neighbourhood of Alexandria; rumours of all kinds were rife.

On the morning of June 26 two telegrams were received from Constantinople, one was addressed to the Ex-Khedive Ismail and the other to Tewfik Khedive of Egypt.

Never before or after did the Sultan of Turkey dare to carry out judgment against the descendants of Mohammed Ali. Even on this occasion, the real author of the act of deposition was not the Sultan, but the Powers behind him.

What would the Powers have done had Ismail, like his great progenitor, Mohammed Ali, refused to comply? This is an interesting question for academic discussion, but not one to be taken very seriously. Not only was the country militarily far behind what it had been in the reign of Mohammed Ali, but also the people had been cowed down to submission, by poverty, exactions and neglect.

It was Cherif who broke the news to the Khedive, who at once sent for Tewfik. Tewfik was on his way to Abdin Palace. Son and father met each other with tears in their eyes; the father rose from his seat and addressing his son said, "I salute Effendina (our Lord) !"

On 30 June 1879, Ismail left Egypt by order of the Powers on his yacht, the *Mahroussa*. The captain of the yacht had

sealed orders not to land on Ottoman territory, and was therefore ordered by his master to make for Naples, where King Humbert I of Italy put the palace of La Favorita at the disposal of Ismail. It is said that this favour was granted in part payment of considerable sums of money lent by the Khedive to the King's father, King Victor Emmanuel II, which had not been repaid. In his new home the Khedive maintained his cheerful manners, lived a quiet life, and often made trips to Paris, Brussels and London. The word "Egypt" was prohibited in the Khedive's place of exile, but he was always hopeful of returning to Egypt. At last his request to land in Constantinople was granted, and from 1887 to 1895 he lived in his palace of Emirghan on the Bosphorus. This was the saddest period of his life. Confined to his palace as a distinguished prisoner, pestered by the Sultan's spies and racked by disease, he rapidly broke down and died on 2 March 1895. His remains were conveyed to Egypt, where a solemn funeral procession, headed by his nephew the Khedive Abbas II, carried on to his grave the First Khedive.

Ismail's name will live in history as a prince who had the qualities and the opportunities that would have fitted him for a far greater career if he had not been wanting in one essential thing—patience. He was hasty in coming to conclusions, hasty in judging character, hasty in drawing up schemes and in having them carried out, hasty in forming friendships, hasty in contracting loans and in transacting business. And because he was a man of large ideas, his lack of patience led him to strain his resources and his personal power to the breaking point. He stood more than anyone else in need of honest, straight advice; but his nature would not brook opposition, and so it is extremely doubtful whether he ever heard a candid word on the actual state of things fall from the lips of any of his entourage.

He always cherished the illusion that he was Khedive by a sort of divine right; and to govern the country by a responsible ministry through a Chamber of Deputies was to him, as to many monarchs at that time, a betrayal of his dearest prerogatives.

When at last the final crisis drew near, he appealed to the country and to the Chamber of Deputies, who were rallying

round him in an attempt to save him; but the mischief was already done and he had to surrender without striking a blow. In his extremity, he found himself alone. His former generosity was forgotten; he was deserted by all his old friends, and the *coup d'etat* of the Powers took him and his people by surprise. When, later on, the people woke up to the real state of things, alarm and discontent filled the country, and the result was Orabi's abortive revolt and the British occupation. For no sooner had Ismail gone than revolution broke out both in Egypt and the Sudan, and the need for a strong ruler was then badly felt.

Ismail, in exile, was closely watching the course of events, and one can suppose that he derived some bitter satisfaction from seeing his deposition avenged. His mistakes had been legion, but so also were the great things he achieved. His outstanding reforms in Egypt; the services he rendered to civilisation, to science, art, and to the world at large—these alone are enough to immortalise the name of the First of the Khedives.

CHAPTER XI

MILITANT NATIONALISM

NO worse affliction can befall a nation than the officious meddling of its military authorities in national politics. Being called upon in time of danger to offer their lives for their country, the military are prone to be disdainful of other civil professions; and given the chance to seize power, they subdue by force all those who refuse to side with them, destroying all vestiges of freedom and civic rights. In their relations with foreign governments their habitual ignorance of statesmanship, and their false pride in the strength of their arms, make them stumble into war with doubtful and often damaging results to the national cause they claim to serve. Such sham adherence to the principles of liberty or the constitution as they may profess at the beginning of their venture serves only as a bait with which to lure the masses; but once in the saddle, they soon revert to their traditional ideal of military dictatorship.

Even in countries more civilised than Egypt, and where public opinion counted for more in the latter part of the nineteenth century, military regimes always impeded the political progress of the people.

Gladstone, the famous Liberal statesman, who was in power at the time the Orabi revolution broke out, when criticised in Parliament for his attack on liberalism in Egypt, said:

> Military violence and the regimen established by military violence are absolutely incompatible with the growth and the existence of freedom. The reign of Cromwell was a great reign, but it did nothing for English freedom. The reign of Napoleon was a splendid reign, but, founded on military power, it did nothing for freedom in France.

In Egypt, unfortunately, the predominance of Orabi and his military associates not only failed to advance the cause of

freedom, to which they paid only lip service, but also proved disastrous to the State, which in the end was occupied by a foreign army.

How this came about the following narrative will explain.

The action of the English and French governments in resorting to the Sultan to depose Khedive Ismail shook the very foundations of the Khediviate and stripped it of all semblance of power. The Khedive had been looked upon as an absolute master, who, though legally tributary to the Sultan, derived power, security and autonomy not only from the firmans granted by the Sultan, but also from the general consent of the people, and from the Treaty of London, concluded in 1840 between the European Powers and Turkey.

On 24 June 1879, however, the Egyptians awoke to see their all-powerful master deposed by the men whom Ismail's father and grandfather had more than once fought and defeated. It was an unprecedented humiliation, from which the Khediviate never recovered. That rude shaking of the supreme authority in the state was bound to reverberate through all branches of authority and most of all in the army.

The army was then under the dark shadow of its inglorious retreat from Abyssinia, and the young Egyptian officers were inwardly boiling with rage against the incompetence of their Turkish or Circassian generals, whom they charged with the ignominy of their defeat. To add to their discontent the European Controllers, in order to cut down expenses, had to reduce the numbers of officers and men.

The story of the military demonstration in February 1878, when over a hundred officers on half-pay gathered in the courtyard of the Ministry of Finance to demand their arrears, has been dealt with in the previous chapter. It was the first milestone on the road to revolution. Only Ismail's personal appearance on the scene saved the situation. The mutineers dispersed ; but their request was granted, and the lesson was not lost on the military. They had only to assert themselves and all doors would open to them. Whom need they fear now that Ismail had gone ? The Sultan was away in Istanbul, and Tewfik was a docile, vacillating Khedive.

Of all the viceroys who governed the country none was more unfortunate than Tewfik. Fate had decreed that he should

ascend the throne at a most critical time; when the very foundations of his authority were shaking menacingly; when all elements in the country were being awakened, thanks to the rapid infiltration of European knowledge and commerce, to new horizons of thought and action; when the European Powers were scrambling for power and colonies in the hitherto dark continent of Africa; when Turkey was being encouraged by some Powers to retrieve her old position in Egypt; when the army was disaffected, and the country was seething with hate against the foreigners who accumulated wealth and filled responsible posts in the Government, enjoying privileges which exempted them even from paying Government taxes like other inhabitants of the country.

Only an experienced ruler with an iron hand and exceptional ability could be relied upon to steer the ship of state clear of such dangerous rocks, and Tewfik was not the man to handle such a herculean task.

Tewfik was born in 1852. He was educated in Egypt and never left the country, even to pay the customary visit to Istanbul on becoming Viceroy, a slight which embittered the Porte against him throughout his reign. But how could Tewfik have reconciled himself to visiting the suzerain who had just played false to his father and let down the Khediviate in the eyes of the world?

Tewfik, as heir-apparent, was kept by his father's side to be trained in the art of government, and so grew up shy and undecided, and rather limited in his knowledge of people and things. But he quite understood the routine of government and the needs and ways of his countrymen.

He encouraged education and took great interest in schools, so much so that he opened a special school near Abdin Palace, at which his two sons and a select group of boys were all educated at the expense of the Khedive. It is to the credit of Tewfik that at a time when profligacy and vice were rampant in Turkey and on the Continent, he had no harem and kept always to one wife. The domestic life of Tewfik and the Vicereine was exemplary and shed lustre and honour on court life in Cairo.

The first problem which confronted Tewfik was the settlement of his relations with Turkey. The Sultan had seized the

opportunity to tighten his hold on Egypt by repealing the firman of autonomy granted to Ismail in 1873. In the new firman to Tewfik the Porte had hoped to regain her former rights; but both England and France intervened, and consequently this was similar to the previous one in all respects except as to the size of the army which, it was stipulated, should not exceed 18,000 soldiers; and the power to negotiate commercial treaties with foreign governments, regarding which it was stipulated that the texts of such treaties should be notified to the Porte for information only, not for approval. The power to contract loans was also restricted to loans for the settlement of the Debt.

With regard to the dual control, it was agreed that the Controllers would not be invested with political or administrative powers. Their functions would be limited to inspection and verification. They were to be allowed to attend the Council of Ministers and to make suggestions, but not to vote. Although, as officials, they belonged to the Egyptian Government, they could not be dismissed without the consent of their own governments.

At the beginning of his reign Tewfik was accused of being anti-constitutional. When Cherif Pasha, his first Prime Minister, submitted his projected constitution. Tewfik objected that the country was not yet fit to benefit by a liberal constitution such as the one Cherif submitted. It was alleged that he had said the constitution was only a mere *decor de theatre*.

It was only natural that Tewfik should guard against a repetition of the incidents that led to his father's downfall. Actually the lesson of his father's failure haunted Tewfik throughout his reign, and was the main reason for his vacillation and complete dependence on the advice of the English and French governments. In all probability, therefore, it was not Tewfik alone who objected to Cherif's constitution.

Cherif's first ministry, which lasted less than six weeks, was followed by a determined attempt on the part of the Khedive to be his own prime minister. This proved dangerous—for at any time mistakes might happen, and then inevitably the blame would fall on the Khedive's head. After a month's trial,

therefore, the experiment had to be abandoned, and Riad Pasha was summoned from Europe to form a ministry.

Riad was an honest, straightforward politician who had served his apprenticeship in the art of government under Nubar, and though a hard taskmaster, he was an excellent administrator and a good economist. Unlike Cherif, however, he could not pride himself on belonging to the aristocracy, being a self-made man who had risen from the modest rank of clerk to the top of the ladder, and unlike Nubar he was a good Moslem, and had a fervent belief in Pan-Islamism and a passion for reform. His political ideas were not dominated by the then fashionable liberalism, but were a form of progressive conservatism influenced by factual politics rather than by theoretical principles.

His administration began on 21 September 1879, and lasted till 9 September 1881. During these two years many reforms were introduced; the most important of which was the liquidation of the Debt. An international commission was formed with full powers to settle the question between the Egyptian Government and its creditors, and it was decided that nearly half the revenue of the state should be allocated to the service of the debt; the revenue for the year 1880 was estimated at £E.8,562,000 of which £E.4,239,000 was earmarked for the creditors, the tribute to Turkey not included. The interest was, as suggested by the Commission of Inquiry, reduced from 5 per cent. to 4 per cent., and thus relations between the Egyptian Government and its creditors were for the first time placed on reasonable and stabilised lines. With regard to the debts contracted with Egyptian landowners by means of the Mukabala and Ruznameh loans during Ismail's reign, only the sum of £.E150,000 levied on newly reclaimed lands was allocated to repayments, the international commission apparently not thinking the care of Egyptian creditors as urgent or as worthy as that of foreigners! Although the disparity between the treatment of Egyptians and foreigners irritated the nationalists and became one of the grievances cited by the mutineers, yet the people as a whole were happy to make that sacrifice so as to end the vexations caused by the Public Debt.

Other reforms were the suppression of more than twenty obnoxious taxes raised during Ismail's reign; the abolition of

the *corvee*, or forced labour, except for controlling the Nile flood; the abolition of flogging and the use of the *korbagh* (the whip); the initiation of reforms in national law courts, and the establishment of a number of modern Government schools in Cairo and in all provincial centres. Well may acute European observers say that Riad's ministry was the best administration which Egypt had enjoyed before or since!

In a despatch to the Foreign Office, dated June 1880, the British Agent says:

> Being anxious to learn how far the numerous administrative reforms made by the present government were producing effect in the country, and whether the general rumour of their success might be relied upon, I requested Her Majesty's consuls in Egypt to furnish me with reports upon the subject. The answer as Your Lordship will see is extremely satisfactory. It leads one to the hope that the condition of the fellah is at last permanently changed for the better, and that the misrule and oppression to which he has been subjected for centuries has passed away for good.[1]

Only in one important respect did Riad's ministry fail to deserve success. Riad had chosen Osman Rifky, a general of Circassian origin, as Minister of War, and Rifky, in the army, pursued a policy believed to be detrimental to the interests of Egyptian officers. He not only preferred Circassians and Turks in promotion, but also made a point of either putting on half-pay or dismissing altogether a large number of Egyptian officers. In addition to this he made matters worse by submitting a law which reduced military service to four years instead of five, which, in the opinion of Egyptian officers, must inevitably handicap Egyptian soldiers in making it difficult for them to qualify for officers. The men, of course, left to themselves would have welcomed a reduction in the years of service, but the Egyptian officers, nearly all promoted from the ranks, saw in the new project a means to confine Egyptians to the ranks with very little chance of advancement. Osman Rifky was therefore held responsible for the hopeless position in which Egyptians in the army found themselves in the first months of the year 1881.

[1]Parliamentary Papers: *Affairs of Egypt*. E. Malet to Granville, 2 June 1880.

They held secret meetings and gave vent to their feelings. Three colonels were prominent among them, and these three vowed on the Koran to defend together the case of the Egyptian in the Egyptian army at the risk of their lives. They prepared a petition in which they stated all their grievances against the Minister of War, signed it, and went in person to hand it to the Prime Minister. Had they submitted their petition to their immediate superiors in the ordinary way not much harm would have followed, but in addressing their petition to the Premier without previously notifying their minister they were guilty of a grave breach of discipline. Riad was so sure of himself that he even thought of referring the petition to the Minister of War to deal with it in the ordinary way; but the colonels were anxious, and knowing the strictness of Riad as a disciplinarian prepared themselves for the worst. Meanwhile the Minister of War was greatly enraged on hearing of the petition, and the Khedive himself was furious, and Riad was obliged to bring the matter before a Council of Ministers presided over by the Khedive. The Khedive, in order to nip mutiny in the bud, was intent on inflicting an exemplary punishment and it was decided to arrest the three colonels, divest them of their ranks, and bring them before a court-martial. The Minister of War took upon himself the personal responsibility of putting these decisions into effect, and promised to take all necessary measures to ensure that the orders would be carried out without the least demur or trouble.

But neither the Khedive nor the Minister had the moral courage to face the culprits with that decision, and accordingly they chose to decoy the colonels into a trap by asking them to see the Minister on the following day, in order to discuss arrangements for a royal procession to be held in honour of the wedding of one of the princesses, the intention being to have them arrested as soon as they entered the building.

Although all these decisions were taken in council, the news soon leaked out and reached the ears of the colonels, who met and drew up a detailed plan for their escape should they be held in the Ministry for more than two hours. The next morning they went punctually to the Ministry of War at Kasr El Nil barracks, and as soon as they were within its walls were

arrested, stripped of their swords and rank, and were taken to the council chamber between two rows of angry and abusive Circassian officers and men. When, at the appointed time, the colonels failed to appear outside the ministry building, word was sent to their regiments and the men at once moved to the rescue. They ignored the fact that new colonels had been nominated to their regiments and had assumed office that morning, and that some of the senior officers in the regiments abstained from going. Late in the afternoon of 1 February 1881, the men marched straight to the Ministry, smashed all obstacles in their way to the council-room, and there, roughly handling the Minister, delivered the colonels, who marched at their head to Abdin. After consultation and some hesitation the Khedive sent for the colonels, and announced to them the dismissal of Osman Rifky and the appointment of Mahmud Sami Al Baroudi, who was then Minister of Wakfs, to the additional post of Minister of War.

There was in fact no other way to quell the mutiny of the officers after the disorder resulting from Rifky's actions. For the Government, having no force to depend on, was compelled to give way. The colonels were retained in their regiments, and the incident ended with loud cheers for the Khedive.

This was the second milestone on the road to revolution; but the road was strewn with thorns and pitfalls and the journey was most dreary and long. The mutineers could have stopped there, but they now foresaw the possibility of achieving complete security, and ambition urged them to further actions.

Riad's first impulse after that demonstration was to resign office, but he was prevailed upon to continue. His self-confidence soon reasserted itself and he proceeded with the reforms which he had planned, one of the foremost problems he had to deal with being the increase in the pay of the military. A new cadre was passed, raising the pay of a private from about twenty piastres a month to thirty piastres, and proportionally raising the salaries of all ranks; and a committee was formed to inquire into the regulations and organisation of the army, as was suggested by the colonels. So long as their friend Al Baroudi, the new Minister of War, was in office, all was well in the army except for a lurking fear in the hearts of the colonels that the Khedive and Riad would

one day avenge themselves on the authors of the demonstration of February 1.

In August that year the Khedive took exception to certain irregularities instigated by the new Minister of War, and Baroudi was therefore dismissed, and Daoud Pasha Yeken, a brother-in-law of the Khedive, was nominated in his place. Daoud took peremptory measures to restore discipline in the army and to curtail the activities of the colonels. They were closely watched and spies dogged their steps wherever they went. Measures were about to be taken to transfer the mutinous regiments from Cairo to the provinces when rumours were circulated that the Khedive had secured a *fetwa*, or religious decree, from Sheikh ul Islam to condemn the soldiers and their officers on a charge of high treason.

The suspicious colonels scented danger and had to act in unison to save their lives. They were enraged at the dismissal of their friend Al Baroudi, and they entertained no doubt whatever that the Government was about to strike at them. They preferred to forestall events, and planned overnight the famous demonstration of 9 September 1881.

The three colonels were Ali Fahmy, Colonel of the Khedive's own bodyguard; Abdul Al, Colonel of the Sudanese Regiment quartered at Tura near Helwan; and Orabi, Colonel of the 4th Regiment quartered at Abbassieh. Aly Fahmy was the scheming head, Abdul Al an impetuous firebrand, and Orabi eloquent and the accepted leader of the triumvirate. All three came from poor fellaheen families, and rose to their positions in the army from privates, by dint of sheer diligence and devotion to duty. Orabi alone amongst them had some claims to education, having attended courses in religion and Arabic language for about four years at Al Azhar University, and this accounts for his being a distinguished speaker who could quote freely from the Koran and sometimes from Arabic literature.

Orabi's name began to shine after the demonstration of February, and people began to recount the story of the daring colonels who succeeded in defying the authorities and deposing the unpopular Minister of War. The success of Orabi drew round him the malcontents who opposed Riad and hoped for a change of ministry. In the English and French

papers Orabi's name became prominent and correspondents from different countries came to interview him. This elated Orabi, and made him believe he was capable of doing things he had never dreamt of.

The colonels thought that if they did not move to the next milestone the Khedive and the Government would soon overtake them and divest them of all power, either by putting them on half-pay or by sending them to the Sudan or even by dismissing them altogether from the army. They knew that already a number of officers were veering round to the Government, and that they would soon be isolated.

Their salvation lay, therefore, in championing the people. This was a new venture that had not appeared on their initial programme, but it was fostered not only by an enlightened circle of notables and pashas professing the fashionable constitutional doctrines prevalent in Europe at that time, but more especially by a small number of English and French humanitarian poets and orientalists who happened to be in Egypt at the time, and took Orabi to be the mouthpiece of a popular constitutional movement. Foremost of these Europeans were De Ring the French Consul-General in Egypt who hated Riad, and Mr. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, an Irish writer, poet and orientalist of means, who happened to be visiting Egypt in 1881. Blunt continued to support the Orabi movement until its complete failure, when, through his mediation, Orabi and his associates were not handed to the Khedive but were tried before a special court and defended by British counsel.

Thus when Orabi planned the demonstration of September 9, he made it clear that he was speaking not in the name of the army but in the name of the people. The extent of Orabi's pretensions could be gathered from the fact that he not only notified the Egyptian authorities of his intention to muster the troops in Abdin Square in order to submit the national demands, but he also informed the Cousuls-General of his intention, assuring them of public safety and signing his notification "Colonel Ahmed Orabi representing the Egyptian Army."[1]

1 Parliamentary Papers: Affairs of Egypt. Cookson to Granville, 10 September 1881.

Both the Khedive and the Government were taken by surprise. Little time was left to negotiate with the army, but the Khedive did not lose hope. He called around him Sir Auckland Colvin, the English Controller, Stone Pasha, the American Chief of Staff, and other high functionaries. Under Orabi's plan all the regiments quartered in Cairo were to move to Abdin that Friday afternoon and no force was left to defend the Khedive; even his bodyguard under Aly Fahmy were not to be depended upon. The Khedive insisted on a last effort. He took with him Sir Auckland with ministers and other high functionaries following, and drove first to the barracks of the bodyguard, where he spoke to the officers and ordered Aly Fahmy to take measures to defend the Palace against any attack. The colonels simulated acquiescence, and the Khedive went on to see the regiment quartered at the Citadel: he spoke to them and they seemed divided amongst themselves. While he was there Abdul Al's regiment, on its way from Tura, passed by the Citadel. Abdul Al knew of the Khedive's visit and went in. He arranged matters successfully and the two regiments moved together to Abdin. Tewfik then moved to Abbassieh where Orabi's regiment was stationed. There they learnt that Orabi, with eighteen guns, had marched to Abdin at the head of the regiment.

The Khedive came back to Abdin and entered the Palace by a side-door. The Palace had been left without guards, for Orabi had ordered Aly Fahmy to withdraw his men from their posts and join him in the Square at once. The square was fully occupied by a force amounting to 4,000 soldiers, with Orabi on horseback in the middle, his sword drawn and surrounded by a group of officers with swords also drawn. The populace were kept at a distance and the neighbouring houses and buildings were crowded with onlookers, all intently holding their breaths in expectation of what was going to happen.

Some advised the Khedive to keep inside the Palace, but Sir Auckland, who had had experience of far more dangerous riots when in the service of the Government of India, encouraged him to appear before the mutineers. With Sir Auckland by his side and followed by Stone Pasha and a few officers, the Khedive, with a firm step, advanced to the Square, Sir Auckland all the time encouraging the Viceroy and prompting him

what to say and what to do. The Khedive's brave and dignified appearance before his mutinous army did not fail to inspire the gathering with awe and respect. On the appearance of the Khedive, Orabi, still on horseback, proceeded to address his master and the Khedive instantly called out to him to dismount. He did so and moved forward, surrounded by a select guard with fixed bayonets. When he approached he saluted the Khedive, who thereupon asked him to sheathe his sword. Orabi obeyed and Sir Auckland murmured some words, to which the Viceroy answered that they were between four fires and the mutineers would kill them. Orabi having sheathed his sword, the Khedive was at a loss what to do next. Bewildered by the extraordinary scene before him he asked Orabi what it all meant. Orabi replied that they had come to submit to His Highness the demands of the army and the nation. "What are these demands?" asked the Khedive. "We have three demands to make," said Orabi. "First, the dismissal of the Cabinet; second, the meeting of the Chamber of Delegates, and third, the raising of the army to 18,000 men as stated in the firman." He added that the army had come to see these demands accepted, and would not move from their places till their demands were conceded. "These demands are not the concern of the military," said the Khedive, and turned to Colvin, asking if he had heard what they had to say. Colvin advised the Khedive not to continue the discussion of such affairs with an officer, and suggested that he should retire to the Palace. The Khedive thereupon left the scene and Cookson, the acting British Consul-General, was left to resume the discussion with Orabi. The conversation ran as follows :

The Consul: I suppose you know that the dismissal of the Ministry is a prerogative of the Khedive; the meeting of the Chamber is a question for the nation to decide. As for the increase of the army, the country is now enjoying peace and has no need for more soldiers. Besides, the decrease in numbers is a measure dictated by the urgent need for economy.

Orabi: Let it be known to you, Mr. Consul, that I am speaking in the name of the whole people, for these soldiers are the sons and brothers of the men who compose the nation. The army is the implement by which the nation will attain its ends and we shall stay here till we are satisfied.

The Consul: This means that you are intent on using force to achieve your ends. This will be disastrous to your country.

Orabi: Why so? Our demands concern the internal affairs of our country, and if others interfere we shall resist till the last breath.

The military stood firm by their demands and the negotiators had to retire to the Palace where the Khedive was holding a conference with ministers, consuls and other high dignitaries. It was resolved to accept the first demand, and waive the other two until reference should be made to the Porte regarding the increase of the army. Orabi agreed to these terms and Riad submitted his resignation.

Then came the difficulty of choosing the new Premier. Tewfik suggested two names, both of which were rejected by the military. At last the Khedive announced his choice of Cherif Pasha, and the announcement was received with loud cheers of "Long live the Khedive!" The army repaired to its quarters in perfect order, and Orabi and his associates asked to be received in audience by the Khedive. They were granted this favour and expressed their loyalty and submission to the Khedive.

Thus ended one of the most critical episodes in the history of modern Egypt. Fate was hovering all the time over the gleaming bayonets of the soldiers and officers surrounding Orabi, and if either side had been guilty of an unfriendly move, an unrestrained step or an untoward word or exclamation, the episode would have ended in catastrophe. It is indeed most creditable both to the Khedive and the military that so critical a move should have been accomplished so peacefully and without the least injury to anyone either in person or in honour.

But Cherif Pasha was a man of independent character. Admittedly he was at the head of the party professing themselves as Nationalists, and who might formerly have sympathised with the colonels in their struggle with Rifky and Riad. But to be a Nationalist was one thing and to take office at the dictates of the military was another. When Orabi went to congratulate Cherif, he intimated to him that the military wanted Al Baroudi as Minister of War, and Cherif strongly opposed such a nomination on the grounds that

Baroudi was an arch-intriguer and would be a source of trouble in his Ministry. In fact, Cherif went so far as to threaten to decline office if the military continued to interfere in politics, and he persisted in his resolve until a deputation of notables waited on him and guaranteed the obedience and political non-intervention of the military in future. On September 14 Cherif accepted office and nominated Baroudi as Minister of War; but he made it clear in his letter to the Khedive that he had taken office in response to the wishes of the notables and in compliance with the order of His Highness. He also expressed his intention of promulgating an organic law, and of maintaining the European Control Department as being necessary for the sound finance of the country.

Cherif began, therefore, with the best intentions in the world, and he found support in all directions. The notables and the country at large acclaimed him as a great Liberal reformer, well known for his integrity and independence of character. Both the English and French legations welcomed him as an honest and a moderate reformer, although he was held to be comparatively weak as an administrator.

The Khedive, although averse to Cherif's Liberal views, liked him for his sincerity and frankness, and none but the military could be considered a danger to him. They were naturally much elated by their success, and unless their power was curbed no proper government could be maintained in the country. It was clear that the colonels derived their power from two factors—popular support and their presence together in Cairo; and if Cherif could disperse their forces by transferring their regiments to different centres he might obviate the second danger. With regard to the first, he had only to call a meeting of the Chamber of Delegates and the power of the military as representative of the people would vanish automatically. It is to the credit of Cherif that he nearly succeeded in both courses. He issued orders transferring Abdul Al with his regiment to Damietta and Orabi to Ras El Wadi, near Zagazig. Both accepted their transfers without demur.

Abdul Al left first and was given an enthusiastic send-off; but on October 6, when Orabi was to leave for Zagazig, the popular leader was accorded a semi-royal reception. At the

station he was acclaimed by notables, officials and the populace, all vying with one another in praising the virtues of their hero. Poems, speeches and farewell orations were delivered. Flowers and sweets were thrown along his way, and men carrying skins and pitchers full of cool sugared water quenched the thirst of the people. When the train was about to leave, Orabi responded with a speech in which he said that in Europe people attained liberty and constitutional governments by internecine wars and bloodshed. "But we in Egypt," proceeded Orabi, "thanks to our benevolent Khedive, were able in a few hours to gain our ends without the spilling of one drop of blood. We have won because we are united. My advice to you is to keep that unity till the end. Long live the Khedive, the giver of liberty ! Long live the army, the seeker of liberty ! Let there be liberty in Egypt for ever !"

A French daily paper described Orabi's procession through the streets mounted on his horse and surrounded by a group of officers on foot, and how he was acclaimed by the populace all along the route to the station, where he gave the above oration with the following finale :

Tant qu'il restera en moi une goutte de sang, un souffle de vie, ils appartiendront a mon bien-aime souverain. *Effendimiz tchok Yasha!*[1]

One of the main reasons why Orabi and his friend had complied with the Ministry's orders was the sudden arrival in Egypt of a Turkish mission composed of two prominent men, Ali Nizami Pasha and Ali Fouad Bey. Orabi had complained to the Porte of the desperate state of affairs in Egypt, and the imminent danger of the country being wholly subjected to Europeans. Orabi had forgotten that the Sultan was anxious to reassert his rights over Egypt, and that the Sultan could hardly have sympathised with a movement originally started against Turks and Circassians in the army.

When the news of September 9 reached Istanbul, the Sultan hastened to send his envoys without even waiting for the approval of the Powers. This was a very dangerous move on the part of the Sultan, since it made the Khedive anxious for

[1]*L'Egyp'te* 8 October 1881. The last exclamation in Turkish means: "Long live Effendina (our lord)"

his autonomy. It also aroused the fears of France, who had just occupied Tunis, and it made both Cherif and the military suspect a retrograde step under Turkey; and while the English Government was not then opposed to an intervention by Turkey to quell any possible mutiny in the Egyptian army, England was also loath to see Turkey established in Egypt. Both England and France therefore concerted their actions, and each sent a warship to Alexandria ostensibly to safeguard the interests of Europeans in case of danger but really to counterpoise the action of Turkey. The Porte protested strongly, and said that the presence of the warships at Alexandria would cause agitation and disturbance among the whole Arab population, and that it was not improbable that it might lead to a general revolution.

In these circumstances the Turkish envoys were hurriedly taken to visit the army headquarters, where Nizami Pasha delivered a strong speech eulogising the Khedive and reminding the officers that the Khedive was the representative of the great Padishah, and that those who disobeyed the Khedive contravened the laws of obedience towards their Sultan.[1] Nothing further seemed necessary. The colonels had shown prompt obedience by leaving for their new quarters, and discipline appeared to be restored in the army. It was therefore decided that the Turkish envoys and the warships should leave Egypt at the same time. When the *Invincible* arrived at Alexandria on October 19 the Turkish envoys had left Cairo to embark for Turkey. Both the British and French ships then left Alexandria.

Having been relieved of the Turkish nightmare, Cherif set out to introduce his constitutional reforms. A decree was issued inviting the Chamber to meet according to the old regulations on December 26.

The day on which the Chamber met under Sultan Pasha, its appointed president, was a memorable day in the history of modern Egypt. It was the first constituent assembly that ever met in Egypt to draw up a constitution for the country.

In the speech from the throne read out by the Khedive himself he laid emphasis on the fact that he had always been in favour of invoking their Chamber, but that delay was unavoid-

[1] Parliamentary Papers: Affairs of Egypt. Malet to Granville 12 October 1881.

able owing to recent preoccupations of the Government. He said that they should all show moderation and sincerity in their discussions and decisions, and should respect the recent law of liquidation, and all other obligations with foreign countries. "The Chamber of Delegates," said the Khedive, "will devote itself entirely to doing good and to the study of the general interests of the country ; . . . it will never depart from a wise moderation, especially necessary during a period of civilising transformation and progress. You must always be prudent . . . and we shall be closely united for the accomplishment of reforms useful to Egypt by the grace of God and the help of his Prophet."[1]

The Khedive was most favourably impressed by the moderate tone and the expressions of loyalty of the notables in their reply to the speech and in their comments.

On 2 January 1882 the British Consul-General, Sir Edward Malet, reported :

At an interview which I had with the Khedive I found His Highness for the first time since my return in September, cheerful in mood and taking a hopeful view of the situation. He spoke with much satisfaction of the apparently moderate tendencies of the Delegates, and he expressed his belief that the country would now progress.[2]

Meanwhile Orabi was nominated Under-Secretary of State for War, with the idea of drawing him away from the soldiers, and also of initiating him into the responsibilities of office. So Orabi returned after three months' stay in his quarters near Zagazig, and soon resumed his irresponsible meddling with the affairs of the Government. His association with Baroudi, the Minister of War, could not have failed to breed trouble for the ministry in due time, but so far Cherif was holding the military in check. Most of the military reforms had been examined and passed by a committee even before the departure of the colonels to the provinces. Trouble arose, however, with the draft constitution submitted by Cherif to the Chamber on January 2. This conformed to modern European constitutions in its liberality. In future no laws would be

[1]Parliamentary Papers : Affairs of Egypt. Malet to Granville, 26 December 1881.

[2]Ibid. Malet to Granville, 2 January 1882.

enacted or taxes levied without having been passed by the Chamber. The Government would be held responsible before the Chamber, and members of the Chamber had the right to question ministers and to introduce bills of laws.

In one important respect the organic law tied the hands of the Chamber. The technical task of determining the annual budget Cherif was careful to leave, at least for the present, in the hands of the Executive, since there were European Controllers whose main work was to frame the budget, and to carry out the financial obligations imposed on the government by the law of liquidation and by the Caisse de la Dette. Both the Controllers and the members of the Caisse de la Dette were Europeans nominated by their governments, and could not be held responsible for their actions before the Chamber. Their contract was to be with the Khedive and his ministers. It was therefore most discreet on the part of Cherif to avoid trouble and collision with the European Powers by putting the budget temporarily outside the purview of the Chamber.

The project as submitted by Cherif was a great improvement on the existing regulations governing the Chamber, which had been in force ever since Ismail called the first Chamber in 1866, and members therefore received the project most favourably. They formed a committee to examine its articles with a view to promulgating the law as soon as possible. But even while the ministers were considering the modifications suggested by the committee a politcal crisis occurred which gave rise to considerable alarm and tension. On January 8, less than two weeks after the meeting of the Chamber, a dual note was presented to the Khedive by the French and English Consuls-General, acting according to instructions from their respective governments. In this note the two governments, addressing their consuls, said :

> You have already been instructed . . . to inform the Khedive and his government of the determination of England and France to afford them support against the difficulties of various kinds which might interfere with the course of public affiairs in Egypt. The two Powers are entirely agreed on this subject, and recent circumstances—especially the meeting of the Chamber of Notables con-

voked by the Khedive—have given them the opportunity for a further exchange of views. I have accordingly to instruct you to declare to the Khedive that the English and French governments consider the maintenance of His Highness on the throne . . . as alone able to guarantee, for the present and future, the good order and development of general prosperity in Egypt . . . . The two governments . . . do not doubt that the assurance publicly given of their formal intentions in this respect will tend to avert the dangers to which the government of the Khedive might be exposed, and which would certainly find England and France united to oppose them. They are convinced that His Highness will draw from this assurance the confidence and strength which he requires to direct the destinies of Egypt and his people.[1]

This was a most mischievous note. Neither the Khedive nor the Consuls-General themselves nor the Sultan nor anybody had asked for such a note. Even the circumstances mentioned in the note did not necessitate such an interference. What was most puzzling about it was that the English Government in office at that time professed liberal views, and their bounden duty was, if they were true to their principles, to encourage such a moderate Chamber as the one recently convoked by the Khedive. The least they could do was to leave the Chamber to carry on its duties at its own risk if it collided with the Executive. Instead of that Lord Granville, the English Foreign Secretary, allowed himself to be dragged along by the French Government, who were then most anxious to safeguard their interests in Tunis and in North Africa as a whole by destroying every possibility of Turkish intervention in Egypt and by suppressing any national or constitutional movement in Egypt.

The Khedive could not help formally thanking the two governments "for the solicitude which the note showed for his own welfare and that of his people." But Cherif was outraged by the note. "Quelle boulette!" he exclaimed. Such a note could encourage the Khedive to thwart all efforts for reform, and it would not fail to unite the notables with the military in

[1]Parliamentary Papers : Affairs of Egypt. Granville to Malet, 6 January 1882.

opposition to the Khedive and the Powers that supported him. If Cherif had had any hopes of alienating the military from the notables, these hopes were now shattered. The Khedive would now be accused of being a puppet of the two governments, and the fear of European interests would cement the ties between the military and the notables.

The note sealed the fate of Cherif's ministry, and frightened both notables and military into a state of desperation and open rebellion.

"The note," wrote Sir Edward Malet, the British Consul-General, "has at all events temporarily alienated from us all confidence. Eveything was progressing capitally and England was looked upon as the sincere well wisher . . . of the country. Now it is considered that England has definitely thrown in her lot with France . . . and that France from motives in connection with her Tunisian campaign is determined ultimately to intervene here."[1]

The immediate result of the note was soon felt in discussing the article relating to the budget in the organic law. The Committee emphasized the right of the Chamber to examine the budget as being the cornerstone of the economy of the State. They expressed their willingness to adhere to the financial arrangements agreed upon by Egypt and the Powers, but would not forgo their right to control the budget. Cherif proposed to put off the article concerning the budget until they were agreed upon it; but the members prompted by the military refused to accept any compromise. It was clear that they meant to embarrass Cherif and make him resign, in order that the military might seize the reins of government. And although the Khedive and the Consuls-General and the Controllers all supported Cherif, the Chamber would not yield.

On February 2 a deputation from the Chamber waited on the Khedive and requested him to change the ministry: this decision was taken outside the Chamber by the military and the Nationalists combined. Asked by the Khedive by what right they made their request, they failed to answer but merely repeated that it was the will of the Chamber.[2]

Cherif therefore tendered his resignation, and the Khedive

[1]Parliamentary Papers: Affairs of Egypt. Malet to Granville, 9 January 1882.
[2]Ibid. Malet to Granville, 6 February 1882.

sent for the deputation again to see him that morning. He asked them whom they would propose as ministers. They declined to answer, saying that it was the prerogative of the Khedive to nominate his government. Nevertheless, everybody knew that Al Baroudi and Orabi, who were at the back of the agitation against Cherif were the men to form the ministry, and the following morning a further deputation was received by the Khedive. The formally asked for Al Baroudi to form the new ministry. The Khedive could not but yield, and on February 4 Baroudi was nominated Prime Minister and Orabi become Minister of War with the title of Pasha. All members of the so-called Revolution Ministry were chosen by the military and the Nationalists ; the Khedive did nothing more than issue decrees.

Baroudi, the president of the new Council of Ministers was not only a soldier but a poet of merit. He had attended a military school, in Istanbul, where he had learnt Turkish and Persian. He had served as an officer in Crete and in the Russo-Turkish War of 1878. But he was distinguished only in literature and intrigues. He had sided with the colonels when they rose against Osman Rifky, and when he became Minister of War he had intrigued against his president Riad and was one of the chief instigators of the demonstration of September 9. When Cherif became Prime Minister, Baroudi had become Minister of War, and lost no time in associating himself with Orabi by appointing the latter Under-Secretary for War. The normal course of promotion for them both then became quite clear and within reach. One more move and Baroudi would become Premier with Orabi as War Minister. It was for this reason that the military precipitated matters after the announcement of the joint note, to compromise Cherif in the sight of the Chamber and the country. Baroudi and Orabi did not hesitate to blacken the character of the man who had been at the head of the National movement and to whom they were indebted for their posts. No wonder therefore that when both came to power, they entertained ambitions of far greater magnitude than mere ministerial office. It was alleged that both aspired to rise to the giddy heights of being Khedives in place of the good-hearted Tewfik.

There could be no doubt that Orabi, after having been

appointed Minister of War and promoted to the grade of Lewa or Pasha in the army, assumed airs and a dictatorial power that made his word supreme not only in the ministry but also in the provinces. Petitions, gifts and deputations crowded his offices and his residence, and although neither he nor Baroudi knew any European language, European correspondents and travellers flocked from all directions to see them both. But in justice to Al Baroudi it must be said that he began his administration by reaffirming the promises made by Cherif and maintaining the dual control on the lines laid down previously by Raid. Of course the organic law as recommended by Cherif and modified by the Chamber was passed three days after the coming of the new ministry. The article concerning the budget was incorporated in the law, contrary to the views expressed by Cherif and the Controllers.

According to Article 35 of the Constitution, the Chamber had the right to examine and discuss the annual budget, and for this reason a committee, equal in number to the ministers, would collaborate with the Cabinet in examining the budget and approving it by a majority vote. But Article 34 precluded the Chamber from considering estimates relating to the tribute to Turkey, the public debt and the law of liquidation.

In the election law that accompanied the constitution it was laid down that election to the Chamber would take place in two stages. Voters had to be twenty-one years old and paying taxes of not less than £ 5 a year, though holders of higher diplomas and Government officials were exempted from that ruling. Members of the Chamber had to be twenty-five years of age. The number of the Chamber was limited to 125 and of these twelve seats were reserved for the Sudan. This was the first time in modern history in which the Sudan was treated as constituting a component part of Egypt. Cruel fate had, however, decreed that these regulations should not take effect, not only because the Sudan was then boiling with the Mahdist revolution, but also because the constitution of 1882 was not destined to be carried out, in view of the regrettable political troubles that followed the closure of the parliamentary session on March 26.

Although there was nothing in the constitution that could make it unacceptable to the Powers, yet the two governments

had taken exception to the way the new ministry was formed and had anticipated trouble.

Commenting on the constitution, De Freycinet, president of the French Council, said: "It would be childish to be discussing the pattern of a carpet when the house in which it was laid down was in flames." Sir Auckland Colvin said: "The house is tumbling . . . . . and the moment is not propitious for debating whether we would like another story added to it. Until civil authority is reassured and the military despotism destroyed, discussion of the organic law seems premature and useless."

Both governments were in constant communication regarding what precautions were necessary to forestall trouble. Cherif's opinion was that Turkey should be approached regarding the possibility of sending a commissioner who would be followed by a military force. France was strongly against any interference on the part of Turkey. When Gambetta, the French Minister, was in power, he was of the opinion that an Anglo-French force would be preferable to the presence of a Turkish force in Egypt. While England would, on principle, have preferred Turkish intervention, she preferred her actions to be conditioned by immediate problems. Thus the idea gained credence that "perfidious Albion" was biding her time with a view to unilateral military intervention at that opportune moment, and unquestionably when that opportune moment came she did interfere with a strong determination to subdue the mutineers. But to say that a calculated policy existed to that end is to give Lord Granville's policy credit for a consistency and a definition which it always lacked.

For a time, however, intervention was not expedient, and the real crisis did not occur. Then quite suddenly the Circassian intrigue against the lives of the military leaders was brought to light. Circassian officers recently pensioned or placed on half-pay were accused of plotting against the lives of the Egyptian military leaders. About forty-eight of these officers were arrested and called before a court-martial in April 1882. They were tried hastily *in camera* and without the aid of counsel to defend them before the court. The decision of the court reflected the state of extreme fear and suspicion now pervading the minds of the military. It con-

demned forty officers, amongst whom was Osman Rifky Pasha former Minister of War, to exile for life in the outer regions of the Sudan, and divested them of their grades and ranks.

When the decision was submitted to the Khedive for confirmation he deemed it just to use his prerogative in modifying it; but he chose to tell his ministers that since Rifky held the rank of general from the Sultan, he would refer the decision to the Porte. The ministers were enraged at the Khedive's reluctance, and when they knew that he had also asked the opinion of the Consuls-General and had sent a special envoy to Turkey on a secret mission, they became incensed and accused him of having betrayed the autonomy of his country by referring his internal affairs to foreigners. Al Baroudi told the British Consul-General that "if the Porte should send an order to cancel the sentence . . . . the order would not be obeyed, and that if the Porte sent commissioners they would not be allowed to land but would be repulsed by force if necessary."[1]

Eventually the Consuls advised the Khedive to use his prerogative without waiting for the Sultan's answer.[2] He accordingly issued a decree dated May 9 commuting the sentence to exile outside Egypt without stripping them of their grades or ranks: the ministers thereupon protested strongly and decided to have no further contact with the Khedive. They openly spoke of deposing him, and with that object in view they summoned the members of the Chamber to a meeting in Cairo without even troubling to ask the Khedive to issue a decree to that effect.

When the members of the Chamber met, however, they acted more wisely. They held informal meetings at the residences of Al Baroudi and Sultan Pasha, their president, and refused to hold conventional meetings in the premises of the Chamber, a moderation on the part of the majority which continued until the end. The extravagance and misgovernment of the military had alienated most of the members and made them regret the defeat of Cherif, and it was only by threats that the military imposed their will on the members. Regardless of their threats, however, the Khedive stood firm in his decision to commute the sentence. He refused to enter into

1 Parliamentary Papers : Affairs of Egypt. Malet to Granville, 8 May 1882.

2 *Ibid.* Malet to Granville, 2 May 1882.

relations with the ministers who had violated the law by inviting the Chamber without authority from him. The deadlock between the Khedive and his ministers contiaued for a week, during which time several attemps to change the ministry failed, as no one would accept office with the military dominating the Government. At last a deputation from the Chamber waited on the Khedive and requested him to leave the ministers in their posts; the Khedive acquiesced and a reconciliation was effected. The sentence as modified by the Khedive was published in the official paper and the ministers professed their loyalty to the Khedive. It was only a short truce, for England and France were sending to Alexandria an Allied squadron of twelve battleships, six from each, apparently to watch over the interests of Europeans in the country, but in reality with the covert intention of intimidating the military into submission.

The squadron arrived on May 19, a few days after the reconciliation between the Khedive and his ministers. The Consuls announced that the visit of the squadron was of a friendly nature, and a circular was sent to the provinces by the Government to this effect. Had the squadron included even one ship flying the Turkish flag the appearance of the fleet could not have failed to impress the military and the people, for the military were then playing with fire. They were in constant relations with the Porte, and were circulating throughout the country statements that the Sultan would never side with the Khedive against them. Unfortunately the absence of any Turkish force with the Allied squadron threw the Chamber and the nation into the arms of the military, for they all then believed that France and England were transgressing the rights of the Sultan and that they were out for an armed interference in the affairs of Egypt.

Backed by the appearance of the Allied squadron, the Consuls adopted a menacing tone in their relations with the Government. On May 25 they both presented what amounted to an ultimatum in the form of a note in which they set forth the following demands:

1. That Orabi should leave Egypt retaining his rank and pay.

2. That his two associates, Abdul Al and Ali Fahmi recently elevated to the rank of Pashas should retire to the provinces also retaining their rank and pay.

3. That the present ministry should resign.[1]

The ministry, after sending a formal protest to the Consuls, tendered its resignation, accusing the Khedive of having accepted the conditions dictated by foreign Powers and thus contravening the terms of the firmans. The Khedive at once accepted the resignation of the ministry, and began his interviews with prominent politicians and with the Consuls with a view to choosing a new ministry. Cherif, the most probable candidate for the presidency, once more declined the offer so long as the military leaders remained in the country. News reached the Khedive from the army and the police that unless Orabi was retained as Minister of War there could be no guarantee of public safety. Sultan Pasha, president of the Chamber, and other deputies advised the Khedive for his own personal safety to keep Orabi in power, for Orabi, in spite of resigning office with his colleagues, had kept in touch with the army and its officers and lost no time in agitating for his reinstatement, threatening the deposition of the Khedive.

The climax was reached on May 27, during a meeting of the delegates and the ulema at the residence of the president of the Chamber, when Orabi, accompanied by his associates and a number of junior officers, thurst themselves on the gathering and began haranguing them and loading them with threats and abuse. They made no secret of their intentions, openly asking the gathering to announce the deposition of Tewfik.

In his frenzy Orabi defied the members and called on those who sided with him to stand, and it is to the credit of the delegates that only the military and a few sheikhs from Al Azhar respondent to his call. Even when one of Orabi's firebrands drew his sword and swore vengeance, the delegates would not budge. The meeting ended in complete disorder, and Orabi and his associates had to conceal their anger temporarily and ask for a reinstatement of Orabi. The following day the deputies, the ulema together with the Coptic

1 Parliamentary Papers: Affairs of Egypt. Malet to Granville, 25 May 1882.

Patriarch, and the Chief Rabbi, waited on the Khedive and requested him to reinstate Orabi as Minister of War. The Khedive refused, but they entreated him to comply with their demand, saying that if His Highness was ready to sacrifice his own life, he was in honour bound to save theirs. The Khedive was convinced, and a decree nominating Orabi as Minister of War was issued.

The Khedive gave way in anticipation of a complete change on the arrival of a Turkish commissioner and a Turkish force. He had formally asked the Sultan to intervene, and the two governments, seeing the urgency of the situation, could not object as they had done before.

It was then that the Sultan's feeble two-faced policy became apparent to all the world. Instead of sending a respectable force to counterbalance the Allied squadron anchored before Alexandria, he sent only an envoy, in the person of Dervish Pasha, a famous Turkish general, and his retinue. The Sultan was actually in a dilemma. Either he must answer the official request of the Khedive by exercising his authority and making a forceful intervention, and thus betray the mutineers, with whom the Porte was in secret communication; or desist from complying with the Khedive's request, and thus declare to the world his importence and chicanery towards Egypt. Hence the feeble and cowardly attitude of the Porte—a feebleness which marked the policy of the Sultan until the end of the crisis. For had the Sultan really wanted to serve the interests of Egypt and the Ottoman Empire, he could have invited Orabi and his associates to appear before him at Istanbul, and in default he could have proclaimed Orabi a rebel and thus cut the ground from under his feet. The Sultan's guilty conscience caused him to waver and dilate on measures to be taken, until he was forced to declare Orabi a rebel when it was too late.

The end was not far off. When the Turkish mission under Dervish landed on June 7, government was practically at a standstill. Orabi and his associates were busy collecting conscripts for the army and signing petitions for the deposition of Tewfik. The members of the Chamber were advised by their president to go to the provinces and avoid being implicated in treasonable proceedings. The soldiers everywhere were

intolerable. A military insurrection was already in the air, and the situation was such that Dervish and his retinue could hardly do anything to control it. As soon as he came to Cairo, he was the Khedive, by whom he was reprimanded for his behaviour in favouring Orabi's envoy to the discredit of the Khedive's own representatives.[1] He also criticised him for the honours and medals he was about to bestow on Orabi and others from both camps. But Dervish was astute and assured the Khedive of his support, and for doing this the Khedive paid him handsomely. Orabi was invited by Dervish, in the name of the Sultan, to visit Istanbul; but Orabi scented danger, and excused himself by saying that the nation would not permit him to leave the country in its present predicament. While Dervish was acting the part of pro-Khedive, his colleague Assaad Effendi, noted for his pan-Islamic activities, was secretly encouraging Orabi.

No wander therefore that on June 11 the famous Alexandria riots took place. It was the natural culmination of an intolerable state of anarchy and indiscipline prevailing everywhere.

Writers and historians may cite different stories regarding the origin of the incident, but the facts themselves are clear and convincing. In a port like Alexandria, with a cosmopolitan population of different denominations, living from day to day under threats from an elated soldiery, regularly fed by wild rumours and a perverse press, and menaced by the presence of an Allied squadron of battleships ready for action at any time—in a place like this, where, since the resignation of the Ministry, no civil government had been held responsible, it should not seem altogether strange to read of an altercation between a Maltese and a donkey-boy, resulting in the murder of the boy and ending in a general melee in which about fifty-three persons, mostly Europeans, were killed.[2] This incident occurred in the afternoon: when night fell, the military authorities appeared on the scene and order was restored. Quite naturally they were blamed for not hastening to quell the riots as soon as they were notified of the trouble by the civil authorities.

1 Parliamentary Papers; Affairs of Egypt. Malet to Granville, 8 June 1882.
2 *Ibid.* Vice-Consul Calvert to Granville, 12 June 1882.

Tewfik, accompanied by Dervish, the Turkish envoy, left Cairo for Alexandria, as soon as he heard of the riots, and thus escaped being besieged by the Orabists. Both Orabi and Dervish reassured the Consuls, and guaranteed order and public security throughout the country. Later, in June, a phantom ministry under Ragheb Pasha was formed; with Orabi, as always, as Minister of War. But events were moving from bad to worse, and Orabi's word was law all over the country. Nothing but armed force could put a stop to Orabi's misrule; and when neither Turkey nor France nor Europe would offer that force, England did, and won.

Chapter XII

OCCUPATION, EVACUATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

I

TOWARDS the end of June 1882 the situation in Egypt presented a most alarming sight. There was first the Khedive, the legitimate lord of the country, stripped of all power and taking refuge from the insurgents in Alexandria, where a strong Allied squadron of battleships was anchoring before the port ready for action at any time. Then there were Orabi and the soldiery, vaunting their triumph over the Khedive and posing as the unconquerable leaderes of the nation in their struggle for liberty and freedom from foreign domination. The people as a whole were ostensibly siding with Orabi but were inwardly cursing him, the Khedive and the European Powers who were the cause of their being enlisted in the army ready to be sent to the battlefield at any time. The gentry, the wealthy landlords, the merchants, the sheikhs and the officials of the Government all paid lip-service to the military, contributed to their support and complied with their orders ; but they all lacked confidence in the power of the military to steer the ship of state clear of danger. They knew that the country could not possibly face a civil war against the Khedive and at the same time fight the enemy invading the country. This rift dividing the nation was the canker that sapped the strength of the warriors and ate into the heart of resistance when the battle drew near.

The Powers were not agreed on their policy regarding Egypt. Although the joint note of January 8 was implemented in May by the presence of an Allied squadron, the two interested governments were at a loss what to do next. They had hoped that the insurgents would be cowed into submission at the appearance of the squardon or that the Khedive would derive power from its presence and strike at the heart of the

mutiny, but they soon discovered to their dismay that the situation was daily getting worse, and that the Europeans were vacating the country in tens of thousands while the nationalists were preparing the country for a sacred war—a *jehad*—against the infidels. Both governments were reluctant to interfere without a mandate, either from the European Powers, or at least from the Sultan the sovereign lord of the country. For it must not be forgotten that the integrity of the Ottoman Empire was guaranteed by the Powers ever since Turkey and the Allies fought against Russia in the Crimean War, and Turkey was admitted into the body politic of Europe according to the Treaty of Paris, 1856.

It was therefore decided that a conference of the Powers should be held at Constantinople, and that Turkey should be invited to send a military force to crush the rebellion in Egypt in accordance with certain conditions to be laid down to guard against a permanent occupation of the country by Turkey.

At first Turkey declined to participate in the conference on the grounds that her envoy in Egypt would put things right and that there was no need therefore for coercive measures to be taken. As the presence of the Turkish envoy did not prevent the Alexandria riots from taking place, and as he was unable to persuade Orabi to appear before his suzerain at Constantinople, the Powers authorised their representatives at Constantinople to hold the conference with or without Turkey.

The conference was eventually held on June 23 in the Italian Embassy, presided over by the Italian Ambassador, the doyen of the diplomatic corps.

The conference began by a statement of "disinterestedness" or a self-denying protocol in which the Powers declared that for the duration of the conference they would abstain from isolated interference in Egypt "except in the case of a force, majeure,' such as the need to afford protection to nationals in danger." This last reservation was added at the suggestion of Lord Dufferin, the British Ambassador, and practically neutralised the effect of the statement, for it was principally England who would apply the term "force majeure" as she wished.[1] It was also Lord Dufferin who proposed that Turkey

1 Parliamentary Papers : Egypt. Dufferin to Granville, 28 June 1882.

should be invited to send a military force to put down the rebellion in Egypt in conformity with a plan to be agreed upon between the Powers and the Porte. The terms governing the Turkish expedition were diligently prepared by the conference, and were notified to the Porte on July 6. According to these terms the Powers stipulated that the Turkish force would not stay in Egypt more than three months, except at the request of the Khedive after consultation with the Sultan and the Powers, and that the expenses of the expedition would be borne by Egypt. The Powers also expressed their hope that the presence of the Turkish force would not interfere with the *status quo* in Egypt or with the "prudent development des institutions egyptiennes."

The Sultan, who was averse to the idea of a conference on the question of Egypt, failed to realise the urgent importance of the case. He had hitherto declined to take part in it, and was curious to understand what the Powers meant by developing "Egyptian institutions." Could it mean the parliamentary regime so repugnant to the ideas of the Sultan ? Would the Porte care to maintain constitutional governments in Egypt when it had recently destroyed all vestiges of Midhat Pasha's constitution in Turkey ?

While the Sultan was pondering over these questions, events in Egypt were rapidly coming to a head. Sir Beauchamp Seymour (later Lord Alcester), the commander of the English squadron at Alexandria, was fidgeting for action, and the fleet which had been silently and sullenly watching events since May 26 at length found a pretext. Sir Beauchamp had informed the Government in England that the military were reinforcing the forts at Alexandria, and were thus menacing his ships at the entrance of the port. On July 3 he was instructed "to destroy the earthworks and silence the batteries if they opened fire." He thereupon addressed a note to the commandant of the Egyptian garrison stationed at Alexandria, asking for the cessation of new fortification and the raising of earthworks in the forts. The commandant sent a civil answer in which he denied having added any guns or erected any new works in the forts. This did not satisfy the commander. He sent an ultimatum early on July 10, in which he asked for the dismantling of the three forts commanding the entrance to the

port. If the demand was not complied with within twenty-four hours, action would take place. The English Acting-Consul officially notified the Government of this decision and thereafter severed his relations with the authorities.

On the receipt of the ultimatum a general assembly of ministers, high officials and officers was held at the Ras El Tin Palace, under the presidency of the Khedive. Orabi as Minister of War attended the assembly and strongly supported the rejection of the ultimatum. After a long discussion in which Dervish Pasha, the Turkish envoy, frankly stated his opinion that the forts were in such a dilapidated condition that they would crumble after a few hours' bombardment, a decision was taken to address to the commander this courageous letter :

Sir,

Egypt has done nothing to warrant the sending of the assembled Allied squadron of battleships before Alexandria. The authorities both civil and military have likewise done nothing to justify the ultimatum sent by the admiral. The forts are in the same state in which they were when the squadron entered the port with the exception of some urgent repairs that had to be made in some old forts. But, sir, we are here in our land and homes, and it is our right, nay, our duty to take measures against all enemies who want to take us by surprise and disturb our peaceful relations—those relations which the English Government professes to maintain with us. Egypt, true to her rights and her honour, cannot without coercion yield any of her batteries or guns. She protests against your ultimatum of this morning and leaves the responsibility of having opened fire to fall on the head of the nation that fires the first shell at Alexandria this peaceful city, thus contravening the laws of war and of humanity !

It was of no avail. The commander had made up his mind to take that most fateful step—the step that paved the way for the occupation of Egpyt, the domination of the Suez Canal and the conquest of the vast tracts of land in the Sudan, the step that cost Britain so much and so many to guard and to

defend in two eventful world wars with only a short interval between.

At last a case for "force majeure" was found, and the English Government notified the powers and Turkey of their intention to bombard Alexandria early on July 11.

None of the Powers, besides Turkey, were more interested in the question of Egypt than France. Bismarck the German Chancellor, was only interested in so far as the question provided trouble for both France and England, especially if an Anglo-French intervention was decided upon.

France was inspired in her policy by different motives. She had her vital interests in the Canal and the public debt, not to mention the historical and cultural ties that bound her to all peoples of the Levant. The logic of the jo nt note and of the Allied squadron would have necessarily dictated on France a policy of joint action. But unfortunately for France, her foreign policy always lacked that consistency which distinguishes English foreign policy. Her frequent ministerial changes made a common uniform policy impossible, so that when Gambetta left the Quai d'Orsay in January 1882 to be replaced by De Freycinet a change of policy became apparent.

The French, under the comparatively feeble government of De Freycinet, wanted a mandate from the Powers to intervene in Egypt. The Powers were then holding the conferences at Constantinople, and France was in honour bound to observe the protocol of disinterestedness. The action which England was about to take was an offensive action against Egypt, a declaration of war of which the Government could not bear the responsibility unless authorised by the Chamber. The Chamber was then absorbed by one sole problem—to guard against Germany on the eastern frontier. They feared lest the distribution of French forces over Tunis, Egypt and other parts of North Africa would leave Franch unprepared *vis-a-vis* Germany.

The French Government therefore, on hearing of the ultimatum, intimated to England that the French would not associate themselves with the English commander in bombarding Alexandria. Their battleships would leave the port, but would remain in Egyptian waters. They would anchor

before Port Said to watch over the Suez Canal.[1] That was a wise step taken by France, but unfortunately she could not follow it up. She recoiled in the end, leaving England alone to dominate the land in whose destinies France had always taken the closest interest. In the words of Gambetta, "France, by withdrawing from the field of action had handed over to the possession of England territories, rivers and ports where the French right to live and trade was as good as hers."

Even the threat to bombard Alexandria would not awake Turkey to her duties. All that she could do on hearing of the ultimatum was to send her representatives to the conference, and to ask Lord Dufferin to defer the bombardment one more day when the Porte would propose a satisfactory solution of the Egyptian question ! The Porte was still thinking in terms of to-morrow, even when such great interests were at stake ![2]

It was of course too late. At 7 a. m. on Tuesday, July 11, the English battleships opened fire on the forts. According to orders the Egyptian forts only replied after the fifth shot. It was a most unequal duel. The ill-equipped old-fashioned forts could not possibly resist the concentrated fire of eight battleships and five smaller gunboats all equipped with modern artillery. The Egyptians managed to stand the onslaught until 5.30 p. m. that day, when most of the forts had been demolished. In this report the English Admiral said : "The Egyptians fought with determined bravery replying to the hot fire poured into their forts from our heavy guns until they must have been quite decimated."[3] The casualties among the Egyptians amounted to about 1,000 killed and 500 wounded. On the English side the damage was negligible and their casualties did not exceed 5 killed and about 28 wounded.

The military, although beaten, did not lose heart. They still persisted in their preparations for war, but whereas it was essential that they should tighten their hold on the littoral of Alexandria and prevent the English from landing, they chose to vacate Alexandria, although they knew for certain that there was no military expedition on board the fleet to occupy the place. Before the military vacated the city, orders were

1 Parliamentary Papers : Egypt. Granville to Lyons, 6 July 1882.
2 Ibid., Dufferin to Granville, 11 July 1882.
3 Ibid., Report by Sir Beauchamp Seymour, 14 July 1882.

given to the soldiers by one of the colonels called Suleiman Daoud Samy to fan the fire started by the bombardment, and start conflagrations all over the place, especially in the European quarter. On the 12th the town was ablaze. Shops and houses were pillaged and a living stream of men, women and children were fleeing with their belongings and animals along the road to Cairo and the Delta. It was a most pitiful sight to see the unfortunate populace wandering in the dark with no destination in view. Some reached Tanta, others reached Cairo destitute of everything, and had to be sheltered in mosques and schools. Riots would also have started in Cairo had it not been for the vigilant care and precautions taken by its governor, Ibrahim Fawzy, who deserved well of the nation.

The news of the bombardment, though expected, stunned the Powers. Even the English Government was for a time stupefied. How could she maintain the idea that the forts were menacing the fleet when they had crumbled after a few hours' firing ? What would the Liberals who were in office say in defence of such a flagrant breach of Liberal principles ? No wonder therefore that the bombardment cost Gladstone one of his closest colleagues, Mr. John Bright, who in protest resigned his post as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. In vain did Gladstone try to dissuade his friend from leaving the Cabinet. "The act of Tuesday," said Gladstone in his letter, "was a solemn and painful one for which I feel myself to be highly responsible, and it is my earnest desire that we should all view it now, as we shall wish at the last that we had viewed it. . . . I address you as one whom I suppose not to believe all use whatever of military force to be unlawful ; as one who detests war in general and believes most wars to have been sad errors (in which I greatly agree with you), but who in regard to any particular use of force would look upon it for a justifying cause, and after it would endeavour to appreciate its actual effect."[1]

Well might Gladstone speak of the actual effects of the bombardment. For indeed they by far surpassed even the effects of the French expedition in 1798.

Henceforth England would have to give up her insular impregnability and take her place in the whirlpool of Contin-

1 John Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, iii, 65.

ental politics. For in addition to Gibraltar, Malta and Cyprus, the main British strongholds in the Mediterranean, England had occupied Egypt, the Suez Canal and the Sudan, and thus assumed a serious responsibility which would tax Britian's resources to maintain and defend in case of war.

But whereas the French expedition opened the eyes of Europe to the strategical importance of Egypt and made the Powers, especially England, coalesce with Turkey to drive the French out of Egypt, the English bombardment of Alexandria seemed to have struck a favourable chord in the Powers' hearts. The conference was rudely shaken by the news, but the Powers made no protests or accusations against the invaders. "We have not received," said Gladstone, "nor heard of a word of disapproval from any power great or small or from any source having the slightest authority." Even France went so far as to state to the English Government that she had no objection to the British advance if England decided to make it.

But England after the bombardment assumed a cautious and most conciliatory tone towards the Powers. Her fleet stood inactive before Alexandria, watching the conflagration and not attempting yet to land troops. She would not take any further step without conferring first with the Powers. So the conference at Constantinople soon resumed its activities, and awaited the Porte's answer regarding the despatch of a Turkish expedition to crush the rebles. Fearing that Turkey would once more shirk her duty, England, to prove her disinterestedness, communicated with both France and Italy and asked them one after the other to co-operate with her in defending the Suez Canal, and even in penetrating into the interior to crush the rebels. Italy was touched by the noble gesture of England but politely excused herself, bearing in mind always to repay England for that favour.

As for France, the question was a complicated one. She was all the time suspecting Bismarck of placing pitfalls in her way. He favoured a joint interference, but would not give England or France or both any European mandate for action. They had to undertake action on their own responsibility, so that while France was willing to associate herself with England in defending the Suez Canal on behalf of the Powers, she was still averse to any expeditionary force being sent into the interior of the

country. When finally the question of the estimates necessary for the expedition came before the Chamber of Deputies, a strong feeling against intervention prevailed among the members, "Messieurs," cried Clemenceau, opposing intervention, "l'Europe est couverte de soldats ; tout le monde attend, toutes les puissances se réservent leur libertè d'action pour l'avenir ; rèservez la libertè de la France !" The Chamber voted on July 29 by a crushing majority against intervention and the ministry of De Freycinet fell.

In view of the attitude taken by France and the other Powers, England prepared herself to act alone, and Gladstone announced in the House of Commons on July 22 : "We shall look during the time that remains to us to the co-operation of the Powers of Europe ; . . . but if every chance of obtaining co-operation is exhausted, the work will be undertaken by the single power of England."[1] England was obviously counting on Turkey's procrastinating as usual.

It is indeed perplexing to follow up the negotiations with Turkey regarding her expected expedition to Egypt. First, Turkey had to communicate her acceptance of the principle of sending an expedition according to the terms laid down by the Powers. Then a military convention between her and England should be transacted and approved by both governments. Before the convention was finally sanctioned, both parties had to come to an agreement regarding the port of landing. Turkey wanted Alexandria in order to show off her power ; England would not consent, and suggested any other port on the Mediterranean—Damietta, Rosetta, or at best Abu Kir or Port Said. Then came the question of a proclamation to be issued by the Porte, outlawing Orabi and his associates. Turkey wanted to evade the issue until her troops actually landed in Egypt, but England insisted on publishing the proclamation as a *sine qua non* of the expedition. Then news reached the English Government that the Sultan was issuing orders to hinder the purchase of mules and fodder for the use of the British expeditionary force in Egypt, and so relations between the two governments became strained. At last, after all details had been settled with difficulty regarding the despatch of 5,000 Turkish soldiers, and the representatives of the

[1] John Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, iii, 63.

Sultan and Lord Dufferin had been authorised to sign the convention; the battle of Tel El Kebir against the Orabists was fought and won by the English, and the military convention had to be shelved.

One important thing arising from the convention served England immensely during her expedition—the Sultan's proclamation against Orabi had been published in Arabic in one of the papers printed in Constantinople. Hundreds of copies of the paper were bought and distributed among the insurgents in Egypt. The proclamation concluded :

> The acts which Orabi Pasha has dared to commit with reference to His Highness [the Khedive] constitute a flagrant violation of the supreme will of His Majesty the Sultan . . . . Consequently, Orabi Pasha is considered a rebel in the eyes of the Imperial Government. Let no one ignore on this occasion that the Ottoman Government is resolved and anxiously desires to maintain the influence and the privilegs of His Highness the Khedive. The present proclamation has therefore been issued in order that all may conform with this supreme decision.[1]

Its circulation did not fail to damp the enthusiasm of the Egyptians and bring about their final defeat.

With that promptitude characteristic of English policy in times of acute danger, Parliament voted the necessary credits for a force of 20,000 men, of whom 5,000 were from India, to sail for Egypt. Sir Garnet Wolseley was nominated commander-in-chief, and with him was the Duke of Connaught, third son of Queen Victoria, as commander of one of the regiments.

The ground in Egypt was prepared. The Khedive had returned to Ras El Tin Palace after the bombardment and communicated with the English commander. He charged the English to maintain order in Alexandria, and issued a decree dismissing Orabi, leaving on his head the responsibility of continuing at war with the English.

Orabi at once declared the Khedive to have forfeited his title as supreme head by siding with the invaders. An order was given to establish a conventional assembly in Cairo com-

[1]Parliamentary Papers : Egypt. Dufferin to Granville, 9 August 1882.

posed of all dignitaries, under the presidency of the Under-Secretary for War, to assume executive as well as legislative powers. Recruits were hurriedly collected from the provinces, and Orabi with his staff waited for the English at Kafr El Dawar, a few miles from Alexandria where strong defences were erected.

The English realised from the beginning that to traverse the Delta from Alexandria to Cairo at that time of the year when the canals would be flooded by the Nile was a plan fraught with danger. So they secretly planned an advance to Cairo from the Suez Canal zone, where the Orabists did nothing to stop the march of the invaders. The Orabists had thought of the Suez Canal zone as a possible route to be taken by the English Expedition, but the wily De Lesseps managed to lull their fears by emphasising the neutrality of the Canal as sanctioned by the Powers, so that England would not dare break the rules of neutrality by taking it as a base of operations.

Alas, the unexpected happened, and after one or two skirmishes near Abu Kir the main expedition passed early in September through the Canal and landed at Ismailia. English agents had been appointed at Port Said and Suez to prepare the way. The Khedive, his ministers and his adherents, foremost of whom was Sultan Pasha, president of the Chamber of Delegates, all spread their propaganda far and wide against Orabi. The Orabists were taken by complete surprise, and their defeat at Tel El Kebir on September 13 was a question of a few hours followed by a complete rout. The whole force of the Orabists, numbering about 12,000, either fell on the battlefield or fled in every direction. In their amazement, people even thought that the British must have bought over to their side Orabi himself, and a sensible man like De Freycinet, who was president of the French Council of Ministers, could not help saying: "La raison generalement admise c'est qu'il s'etait etabli une sorte d'entente entre le commandant anglais et Orabi. L'indulgence montree plus tard vis-à-vis de ce dernier corrobore cette hypothese."[1]

This is of course an absurd allegation. If the English Government showed some clemency towards Orabi after his

[1] De Freycinet, *La Question d'Egypte*, 316.

defeat, it was simply done in conformity with the rules of the game of not kicking an opponent after having knocked him down. What was probable was the undoubted secret adhesion of one or more officers to the side of the Khedive. The turn of the tide against Orabi was quite perceptible all over the country, especially after the outlawing of Orabi by the Sultan.

As soon as the debâcle at Tel El Kebir started, Orabi left the battlefield on horseback and made straight for Cairo. There he met the conventional assembly, and explained to them the disaster that had befellen his army. He tried to persuade them to undertake the defence of Cairo. But the members had had enough of him. They told him that they were not ready to see Cairo demolished in the same way as he had caused the demolition of Alexandria. He was therefore advised by his friends to surrender to the English, who entered Cairo on the 14th and occupied the Citadel, together with the Abbassia and Kasrel-Nil barracks. He did so, and his comrades followed suit one after the other.

The Khedive, who had formed a new ministry under Cherif Pasha, with Riad Pasha as Minister of the Interior, returned to Cairo on September 25 in company with the Duke of Connaught, Sir Garnet Wolseley, the Commander-in-Chief and Sir Edward Malet the British Consul-General.

It was a sign of the times that the Khedive was escorted all along the route to his palace by British troops, and that three days afterwards a military review of the army of occupation was held in the Square of Abdin Palace, the same place where a year ago Orabi and his associates had held their famous military demonstration. What a change brought about in one year's time through the folly of one man!

Orabi and his coadjutors were tried before a special court composed of Egyptians; but Orabi was defended by English lawyers, this being arranged by Orabi's European friends and approved by himself as a guarantee against an outburst of vengeance by his adversaries.[1] Orabi pleaded guilty of rebellion, but denied having instigated the Alexandria riots or the conflagration that followed in the wake of the bombardment. According to a previous arrangement between the two governments, a death penalty was pronounced by the Court and was

[1]Parliamentary Papers: Egypt. Blunt to Gladstone, 27 September 1882.

immediately followed by the reading of a Khedival decree commuting the death-sentence to one of perpetual exile. Orabi and his friends were degraded and their property confiscated. It was decided that the seven arch-rebels[1] should be banished to Ceylon, and a special ship was chartered to take them from Suez on December 26 to their new abode. Orabi was thankful for the commutation of the death-sentence, and when told of Ceylon, he remarked that he was glad to go to the place where Adam established himself after his expulsion from heaven!

Riad Pasha as Minister of the Interior resigned his post as soon as he heard of the commutation of the death sentence. He insisted on capital punishment being meted out to those convicted of treason and rabellion. Had a death sentence been pronounced against them by a court-martial after the defeat at Tel El Kebir no great injustice would have been done. Their crime would not only have been treason and rebellion but also ignominious failure and incompetence in battle. This alone would have been enough to convict them. "Failure," says the Arabic proverb, "would brand the mother of him who fails with the stigma of folly!"

The Orabists had courted disaster and sealed their fate ever since they dismissed Cherif from office, and began to preach a civil war against a goodhearted Khedive who could have performed the part of a constitutional monarch with credit. But the Orabists were out to seize absolute power, not to curb it, and so they trampled down the constitution and intrigued against their sovereign. When the invaders came, they saw a disunited nation governed by a handful of adventurers who knew nothing about war, statesmanship or even decent government. The nation never forgave the Orabists for their misguided militant nationalism, nor did she forget the evils that attended their sinister efforts. No wonder the fellaheens have since branded the Orabist regime as El Hoga (the mad storm)!

[1]These were Orabi, Baroudi, Tolba, Abdul Al, Ali Fahmi, Mahmud Fahmi and Yacoub Sami.

II

The first question to confront the English after occupying the country was, strange to say, how and when to vacate Egypt. Nothing less than a promise of evacuation could at that time pacify the Powers, especially France and Turkey. With that end in view Lord Granville sent in January 1883 his famous circular to the Powers, making it clear that "although a British force remains in Egypt for the preservation of public tranquillity, Her Majesty's Government are desirous of withdrawing it as soon as the state of the country and the organisation of proper means for the maintenance of the Khedive's authority will admit of it."

The French had hoped for the maintenance of the dual control as it existed before the Occupation, but the English firmly refused to give way, believing that France had forfeited her special position in Egypt by withdrawing from the field of action in 1882. France was so much hurt by the refusal that M. Duclerc, the French Premier, had to announce France's opposition by saying: "Le gouvernement de sa Majeste Britannique . . . nous met dans l'obligation de reprendre en Egypt notre liberte d'action." Henceforward the French adopted that policy of thwarting English plans in Egypt which lasted until the Entente Cordiale in 1904. Thus was England left alone to assume full responsibility of action in Egypt, and Lord Dufferin, her ambassador at Constantinople, was sent to Egypt on a special mission to organise the administration of the country. Neither Lord Dufferin nor Lord Granville himself could, at that time, have entertained any idea of a long occupation of the country. Their mission seemed to be summed up in restoring order, introducing some preliminary reforms and then withdrawing the army of occupation.

Even as early as August 1883 Cherif Pasha, the Prime Minister, asked for a reduction of the army of occupation on the grounds of economy. The army of occupation then numbered 7,000 soldiers, and its reduction to 2,000, as suggested by Cherif, would certainly have cut short expenditure, and at the same time restored some confidence in English promises. Nobody then dared to propose the total withdrawal

of the army of occupation after one year's stay. Perhaps they feared that such a measure would endanger public order in a country recently emerging from anarchy and bereft of its army.[1]

In any case, Lord Granville wrote back that "Her Majesty's Government entirely concurred in the desire to reduce the force as far as was consistent with the preservation of public order," and added that Sir Evelyn Wood, a military authority, had expressed to him personally the belief that the British garrison might be entirely withdrawn from Cairo without disadvantage.

Sir Evelyn Baring (later Lord Cromer), who was appointed British Agent and Consul-General in Egypt in September 1883, and to whom Lord Granville referred the matter, endorsed this opinion on October 9 by saying that he had come to the conclusion, after consultation with the military authorities, that the British garrison could safely be withdrawn from Cairo to Alexandria, and that its total force could be reduced to 3,000 men."[2]

On November 1 Lord Granville answered that Her Majesty's Government approved of the recommendation that the army of occupation be concentrated at Alexandria and its force reduced to 3,000. But unfortunately, before steps were taken to put that decision into effect, news came from the Sudan of the rout of General Hick's army in the Kordofan, and of the danger to which both the Sudan and Egypt would be exposed in consequence of the success of the Mahdi. This necessitated a postponement of both withdrawal and reduction. The postponement regarding the withdrawal has continued until the present time.

Another occasion on which the question of evacuation formed part of international negotiations presented itself in 1884, when Lord Granville addressed a circular to the Powers, dated 29 April 1884, inviting them to a conference in which to examine the financial situation of Egypt and to provide for her urgent need of money. The money was needed to pay the indemnities for damages incurred during the bombardment and the conflagration at Alexandria, and during the riots that

[2] Parliamentary Papers: Egypt. Malet to Granville 26 August 1883.

[2] Ibid. Baring to Granville, 9 October 1883.

subsequently broke out at Benha, Mehalla and Damanhur. There was also the expenditure needed to quell the rebellion in the Sudan, and to start some essential irrigation works meant to increase agricultural produce in the country.

The French Government cleverly accepted the invitation and stipulated that the political question should be "conjointly" examined. Negotiations, therefore, began between both governments during which Lord Granville stated regarding the withdrawal of British troops from Egypt :

> There is some difficulty in fixing a precise date for the evacuation . . . for in practice such a date may prove either too long or too short. But Her Majesty's Government, in order to dissipate any sort of doubt regarding her policy in this affair . . . promises to withdraw her troops at the commencement of the year 1888 provided the Powers *will* be of opinion that the evacuation can take place without compromising peace or order in the country.

Lord Granville added that at the end of the English occupation, Her Majesty's Government would suggest to the Powers and the Porte a plan by which Egypt would enjoy the status of a neutral country on the lines enjoyed by Belgium.[1]

On receiving that correspondence the French premier, M. Jules Ferry, made an important declaration in the Chamber in which he said :

> L'Egypte, messieurs, n'est ni chose anglaise, ni chose francaise ; c'est une terre essentiellement internationale et europeenne. C'est l'Europe qui l'a fecondee . . . La question d'Egypte n'a jamais cesse et ne cessera jamais d'etre, avant tout et par-dessus tout, une question europeenne.[2]

Having secured this promise, the French attended to the financial part of the question, which to them was then of paramount importance.

The conference met in London on June 28, and at once examined the financial question. The English Government had proposed to the conference to reduce the interest on the public debt by one half per cent. from 4 to 3½ per cent. The

[1] Parliamentary Papers: Egypt. Correspondence between Granvilleand Waddington, June 1884.

[2] De Preycinet, *La Question d'Egypte*, 338.

French, as was expected, strongly opposed the proposal and would not give way. The conference thereupon dispersed without any result. The following year, however, England proposed a loan to Egypt of £9,000,000 at 3½ per cent. to be guaranteed by the six Great Powers. By the Convention of London, March 1885, France and the other Powers agreed to that proposal but again no mention of the evacuation was made. Both Gladstone and Granville revoked their former engagement and resumed their liberty of action.

M. de Freycinet, commenting on France's lost opportunity, says :

> Plutot que de reduire le revenue de la dette egyptienne d'un demi pour cent, nous avons repousse le rare avantage politique qui nous etait offert. L'absorbant souci de l'interet des creanciers qui nous avait deja fait commettre tant de fautes nous a fait commettre cette derniere.[1]

The last occasion on which a formal promise of evacuation was made occurred during Lord Salisbury's tenure of office in 1887. Salisbury succeeded the Liberal Ministry of Gladstone in June 1885. He wanted to placate Turkey and the Powers over the Egyptian question by coming to an agreement with Turkey, by which the military occupation of the country would end at a definite date. He therefore sent Sir Henry Drummond Wolff on a mission to Constantinople and Cairo with a view to securing the co-operation of the Sultan in the settlement of the Egyptian question, and in restoring order and good government in the Sudan. Obviously the English Government was then under the wrong impression that the Sultan's word carried much weight in the Sudan, whereas the Mahdists recognised neither Sultan nor Khedive, and that part of Wolff's mission therefore failed by itself. Wolff arrived first in Constantinople in August 1885. He arranged with the Porte that Britain and Turkey would each send a special commissioner to confer together with the Khedive on the best means to pacify the Sudan and to reorganise the Egyptian army. When they had ensured the security of the frontiers and the good working of the Egyptian Govenment, "they will consult as to the conclusion of a convention regulating the with-

[1] De Freycinet, *La Question d'Egypte*, 436.

drawal of the British troops from Egypt in a convenient period."

Turkey appointed as special commissioner Mukhtar Pasha, known as El Ghazi because of his triumph in war over the Greeks. Mukhtar and Wolff met in Cairo, and after long negotiations a convention was signed at Constantinople in May 1887 by Wolff and the Turkish plenipotentiaries. According to this convention it was agreed that at the expiration of three years from the date of the convention, Her Britannic Majesty's Government would withdraw its troops from Egypt. If at that time there was any appearance of danger in the interior or from without, the evacuation would be postponed until the disappearance of the danger, and then the British troops would withdraw immediately.

It was also laid down in the same article that after the withdrawal of the English troops and the ratification of the convention, the Powers would be asked to guarantee the inviolability of its territories. Both governments were authorised by the convention to send troops to Egypt in case of danger, and agreed to withdraw their troops as soon as the causes that had led to their intervention disappeared. As it was stipulated in the convention that the Powers would be asked to adhere to its terms, diplomatic opposition soon began after its signature by the plenipotentiaries. France and Russia were loud in their protest before the Sultan. The convention, in their eyes, was tantamount to a partnership between Turkey and Britain in governing Egypt. By the convention, the Sultan was told, England would legalise her illegitimate position in Egypt by an international agreement. The grand Vizier was reproached by the Russian Ambassador for having "gratuitously sacrificed the rights of the Sultan to England." France considered the convention a partial abdication of the Sultan's rights over Egypt. The two ambassadors said that the ratification would warrant their countries in occupying Turkish provinces, leaving them only when instruments similar to the Egyptian convention between themselves and the Porte had been ratified. Both France and Russia employed extreme pressure on the Sultan to withdraw his consent, so that in the end the convention was not ratified and Wolff had to leave Constantinople empty-handed.[1]

[1] Parliamentary Papers: Egypt. Wolff to Salisbury, 11 and 15 July 1887.

Although the Wolff mission proved to be fruitless in so far as the evacuation of British troops was concerned, it apparently exonerated England from the charge of permanent occupation or supplanting Turkey from its suzerainty over Egypt. Her answer to any charge of this kind would in future be that she had negotiated and drawn up a convention which was signed by both parties in compliance with the Sultan's order, but in the end the Sultan, having fallen under the influence of other European advisers, repudiated the agreement and failed to ratify it. Henceforth the English Government felt no qualms of conscience regarding the occupation of Egypt and proceeded in their plans with a strong and firm will to stay. Salisbury wrote to Wolff :

> Although circumstances have prevented the completion of the settlement, the negotiations which you have conducted with so much ability have had important results in defining formally the character of the English occupation of Egypt and the conditions which are necessary to bring it to a close.[1]

The question of evacuation was not again formally raised after the incident of 1887 until the outbreak of the national movement of 1919 and the proclamation of Egypt's independence, when after several rebuffs the national leaders concluded with the English Government the treaty of friendship and alliance in London on 26 August 1936, Article 1 of which states that the military occupation of Egypt by the forces of His Majesty the King and Emperor is terminated. But according to Article VIII "His Britannic Majesty was authorised by His Majesty the King of Egypt to station forces in Egyptian territory in the vicinity of the Canal . . . with a view to ensuring in co-operation with the Egyptian forces the defence of the Canal . . . The presence of these forces shall not constitute in any manner an occupation and will in no way prejudice the sovereign rights of Egypt."

The forces were limited to 10,000 men and 400 pilots, and the duration of their presence was left until "such time as the High Contracting Parties agree that the Egyptian army is in a position to ensure by its own resources the liberty and entire

[1] Parliamentary Papers; Egypt. Salisbury to Wolff, 22 July 1887.

security of navigation of the Canal." It further stated that if the two parties did not agree thereon, the question would be submitted to the Council of the League of Nations for decision.[1]

Recently the part played by Egypt during the Second World War, and especially her brave and noble stand during the critical period of the El Alamein battle, convinced England beyond any doubt of Egypt's loyalty towards democracy in general and towards the Allies in particular. This, as well as the United Nations Organisation, the mechanisation of armies, the progress of military aviation and the atomic inventions, have lately combined to induce both nations to reconsider their relations on the basis of the complete evacuation of British troops from Egypt.

III

Even after the English had planted themselves in Cairo with a strong garrison occupying the Citadel, they were still undecided in their policy. They were dominated by two conflicting motives, the one persuading them to stay on and make good their occupation of the country, and the other inducing them to coax the Sultan and the powers into acquiescence by promising to withdraw from Egypt as soon as possible. And thus began that policy of make-believe which characterised the system of government introduced by the English occupation in Egypt.

Coming into the country as the allies of the Sultan of Turkey to uphold the Khedivate and crush the rebellion, the English could not possibly claim to have conquered Egypt with a right to annex it to their dominions, or even to declare it under their protection. They therefore gave way before formalities and held fast to realities. They left the country to be ruled outwardly by the Khedive and his ministers, whereas in fact their advisers and inspectors were the actual pullers of the strings of state. In name the British Agent in Egypt was on equal footing with other representatives of the Powers and

[1] Article 8, Treaty of Alliance between the United Kingdom and Egypt, London August 1936.

stili called himself Consul-General ; but in reality the British Agent enjoyed in Egypt a power as absolute as that enjoyed by the Roman dictators and proconsuls of ancient times. British officials, who filled all important posts in the different departments of the Government, had to don tarbooshes ; and considered themselves as Egyptian Government officials, although they all had to receive orders from and report to the British Agent. The long arm of that Agent stretched to the remotest office in Upper Egypt, and his shadow threw its silhouette on all functions of the state. The strong arm of the Consul soon bent everything to his will. Only the Europeans backed by the capitulations escaped to a certain extent the entire weight of the occupation. Nothing was nearer to the heart of the English than the desire for abolition of those vexed capitulations. But when nationalism threatened to raise its head in the country, the English did not hesitate to bring forward the capitulations bugbear to bar the way before the Nationalists.

However, the year 1888, which saw the failure of the Wolff convention, saw also the first signs of recuperation in the internal affairs of the country. Lord Dufferin, the English Ambassador at Constantinople, had been delegated to Egypt as a special envoy to report on the reorganisation of the government under the new regime of the English occupation. In order not to arouse any fears on the part of the Porte or the Powers the political status of the country was left as it was. The Khedival government remained in full enjoyment of its privileges granted by the Sultan's firmans.

The only apparent innovation, besides the presence of the British garrison, was the residence since 1887 of the Turkish special commissioner, Mukhtar Pasha, who after the failure of the Wolff convention remained in his post until his death. His presence served as a mere symbol of Turkish suzerainty besides the all-powerful British Consul-General. It happened that Mukhtar Pasha was a soldier of unimpeachable character and his continuance in office, though resented by the Government, was harmless.

The decree of 28 August 1878, limiting the absolute power of the Khedive and laying down the rules that governed the proceedings of the Council of Ministers, still held good. But

two important modifications were introduced. First the English financial adviser had his seat in the Council though without executive power. He was to represent the dual control of pre-occupation days, but without his French colleague. The presence of the English adviser, who was an Egyptian Government official, was a guarantee that all the wishes of the English Consul-General would be carried out without having the appearance of being pressed upon the ministers from outside. And although advice regarding the finance of the country was his main occupation, he could also express his opinion on other questions dealt with in the Council.

The second modification, which was in the nature of a general ruling to be applied in all emergencies, was confidentially communicated to the British Agent by Lord Granville in January 1884, in consequence of Cherif's opposition to the policy dictated by the British Agent of withdrawing Egyptian forces from the Sudan. In that far-reaching note Lord Granville put in the hands of the British Agent and Consul-General the sword of Damocles which the Consul hastened to hang over the heads of ministers, mudirs and all high functionaries of the state, so that at the least friction the sword would do short work with Damocles whoever he might be, even if he were the Khedive himself.

The purport of that note was:

> It is essential that in important questions affecting the administration and safety of Egypt, the advice of Her Majesty's Government should be followed, as long as the provisional occupation continues. Ministers and governors must carry out this advice or forfeit their offices.[1]

On one occasion Cromer had to intimidate Tewfik. He reminded him that his father Khedive Ismail was near at hand living in Constantinople, meaning that if the Khedive did not give way he would be replaced. The much-maligned Khedive gave proof of a good deal of astuteness and presence of mind by the following dignified repartee; "Un ministre, on peut toujours changer, mais le Khedive c'est autre chose!"[2]

[1] Parliamentary Papers: Egypt. Granville to Baring, 4 January 1884.
[2] Lord Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, ii, 332.

Lord Dufferin next turned to the constitutional aspect of the government. England would have contradicted herself if she had recommended the maintenance of the Chamber of Delegates according to the constitution of January 1882. The whole storm which ended so badly for Egypt was raised over the question of the competence of the Chamber to deal with the budget. But had the Liberal Government of Gladstone shown some consideration for the principle of initiating Egypt into proper parliamentary government by retaining or even modifying the aforesaid law, she would have spared herself the opprobrium of having stifled constitutionalism in the country to guard her own interests.

Neither could Lord Dufferin ignore the past altogether and invest the new administration of the country with full executive and legislative powers. He chose a most unhappy means. The organic law of 1882 was repealed, and in its place a Legislative Council and a Legislative Assembly were created by a decree dated May 1883. Both were legislative bodies only in name. Fourteen of the thirty members of Legislative Council were nominated by the Government, the rest were elected by indirect suffrage. Although it was stipulated that laws had to be submitted to the Council before being promulgated, the Government was at liberty to adopt the views of the Council or reject them. If they were rejected, the Government had to send a note explaining the reasons that led to their rejection, without allowing any discussion to take place. The Ministers might attend the meetings of the Council and take part in its discussions, but the meetings were not open to the public, nor had the members any right to ask questions or make interpellations. Neither the Council nor the Assembly had the power to initiate any laws. Members of the Assembly were likewise elected by indirect suffrage and their status also was consultative. Only on fiscal questions had the Assembly a deciding vote. No direct taxation could be imposed by the Government without the approval of the Assembly. The Assembly had to meet once every two years and the public were not admitted to its sittings. It was the Legislative Assembly which in 1909, with only one dissentient, rejected the prolongation of the Suez Canal Company concession for forty more years after its expiration in 1968.

Besides the two legislative bodies the organic law of 1883 provided for other assemblies, the Provincial Councils, to be instituted in the provinces and to be composed of members varying in number according to the number of districts in each province. The main function of these councils was to legislate for the local needs of the provinces. Members of the councils were to be elected by general suffrage. The law concerning provincial councils was later modified, and was not put into effect until 1909.

From 1883 to 1912 no change whatever had taken place in the phantom constitutional system laid down by Lord Dufferin. In 1913, however, Lord Kitchener, then British Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, introduced one further move by amalgamating the two legislative bodies into one Legislative Assembly, with one or two improvements on its predecessor. The new Assembly was given the right to initiate laws, to question ministers and to elect one of its two vice-presidents. Another improvement was that the public was admitted to its sittings. But the newly constituted Assembly met for one session only, and then came the Great War of 1914, with its accompanying Protectorate over Egypt, and the National movement of 1919.

On this unconstitutional basis the Occupation proceeded to build its reforms. These were all-embracing and far-reaching reforms, reforms that made the name of Lord Cromer, their instigator and guardian from 1883 to 1907, shine and live in the annals of great administrators in history. But having been imposed on a disaffected nation through the instrumentality of Cromer's own nationals and without the support of any worthy national representative body, these reforms, though appreciated and enjoyed by all, have always served the Egyptians as a rude reminder of their subjection and loss of national prestige. When the English at the beginning of the Occupation were sparing no effort in blackening the history of Egyptian rulers and administrators, the Egyptians could find nothing in the reforms introduced by the English but a continuation of the great reforms started nearly a century ago by the great Mohammed Ali and his successors. When the English boasted of having constructed the great Assuan Dam, the

Egyptians cited the great irrigation works in the Delta, the Ibrahimieh Canal in Upper Egypt and the construction of the famous Barrages. The railways and canals of the Occupation period did not much exceed in length those constructed during the pre-Occupation period.

In three important aspects of reform, in education, in industry and military and naval power, the country during the Occupation was far behind European countries, and even compared with its former standard, Egypt during the Occupation was decidedly not on favourable ground. The English in their reforms had decided to attend to the material prosperity of the country as a whole, leaving the cultural and moral elevation of the people to look after itself to a great extent. And when we bear in mind that cultural reforms are in themselves of slow growth compared with fiscal or agricultural reforms, we can understand how it was that the good brought about by the English in Egypt did not live after them, and was rather obscured by the surviving major blemishes of ignorance, political inferiority and unconstitutional government. These were the three great defects that marred the work of the English in Egypt and prepared the way for the revolt against them in 1919. Lord Cromer and others might accuse the Egyptians of ungratefulness ; but the fact remains that the English in Egypt as everywhere outside the Anglo-Saxon orbit have always lived aloof in a world by themselves, and have never, until lately, tried to win over to their side the affections of the people amongst whom they lived. Even Cromer, that great exponent of the Occupation, did not disdain to admit in his book on modern Egypt that after twenty-four years' stay in the country he did not speak Arabic.[1]

The English were content to lighten the burden of taxation and to secure water for the fellah's lands, justice in the courts before which his complaints were examined, and liberty of action within the limits laid down by the law. But to foster enthusiasm for enlightenment by opening the doors of schools and by establishing universities and research institutions, to enhance the prestige of the country by raising the standard of its army and navy, to instil patriotism and to encourage self-government by instituting proper parliamentary government

1 Lord Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, i, 7.

—to do all that was not only foreign to their policy but was rigidly opposed and combated.

Undoubtedly the material reforms worked out by the English did in due time bear fruit, and the country after a decade of years literally rolled in gold and plenty. The whole world recognised the recovery of Egyptian finances, and bore witness to the masterful ingenuity of the English authorities. But where on this planet do we find a patriotic people who really prefer bread to knowledge and butter to guns ? Not that the Egyptians are a warlike nation. Far from that ; for though they make excellent soldiers they are a peace-loving nation. But they are very sensitive regarding their prestige as a nation—a progressive nation ; and no material benefit could ever compensate them for the loss of their Independence. After all, nations are generally judged according to moral and military standards—material progress alone is no criterion of a nation's worth.

Even the material prosperity that flooded the country subsequent to the Occupation reforms was mostly felt by either the rich landowners or the fellaheen farmers. The middle classes, the urban population, the intelligentsia and the bourgeoisie—those who form the backbone of the nation were only slightly touched by the magic wand of the reformer, for the simple reason that the great majority of them did not own lands. The landowners were the main beneficiaries of the reforms. As to the enlightened or educated classes, they were galled to see practically all responsible and important posts in the Government occupied by foreigners, not necessarily all English and French—but even by Greeks and Levantines in whom the English had confided to avail themselves of their knowledge of Arabic and of Europian languages as well.

Hence the ingratitude, the oblivion and the distrust shown by the people towards the English. And the blame thereof should, in justice, fall on the head of the guardian who fed his ward and fattened him but failed to treat him, when he grew up, as a man like himself, and continued to share his house with him even long after he had reached his majority.

In the end, of course, the dawn of awakening approached, and the nation began to recover from its long political stupor. A sense of national consciousness overwhelmed the nation and

the people began to assert themselves, especially in the educational field, where the policy of the Occupation was strongly resented.

The English were accused of having purposely neglected educational reform in order that the people might grow ignorant and submissive. There could be no doubt that education was held back so that more important material reforms could be accomplished. Nor can it be denied that the estimates allotted for education were during the Occupation paltry and insufficient to meet the true needs of the country. In 1890, that is eight years after the Occupation the estimates for education amounted only to £E.81,000, whereas in Ismail's reign it was allotted £E.75,000, which was reduced to £E.70,000 when the financial crisis began towards the end of the reign.

The main policy of the Engligh was based on the spreading of elementary, and later on, elementary technical education, leaving primary, secondary and higher education stationary. Their idea was to fill the gap that separated the lower classes from the upper classes, and to maintain a certain equilibrium between the different strata of the population. They were intent on not moving forward with super-elementary education until elementary education has sufficiently spread among the poorer classes.

In principle that was a sound policy ; but to make it the main aim of education meant the creation of troops without sufficient officers or leaders to guide them, the maintenance of a civil service composed of mere clerks, and artisans without engineers, directors or advisers. In spite of the fact that the population of the country increased from 6,804,021 in 1882 to 11,287,359 in 1907 and the revenue during the same period from £E.9,431,134 to £E.16,832,959, the number of non-elementary schools increased from 38 to 58, of which only four were secondary schools and six higher schools—the same number as had existed twenty-five years ago!

It was not until 1906, the last year of Cromer's tenure of office in Egypt, that a distinguished Egyptian Minister of Education—Saad Zaghlul, the future national leader—inaugurated an era of reform in education by admitting free education for a limiled number of poor boys, and by introdu-

cing the teaching of subjects in primary and secondary schools in Arabic instead of English as had been the rule since the Occupation.

And not until 1918, a year before the National movement, did the authorities begin to think—only to think—of establishing an Egyptian university: ten years after a popular university had been established in Cairo and endowed by popular contributions.

In 1908 a national committee, presided over by Prince Fuad, the future first King of modern Egypt, inaugurated a campaign for the establishment of the popular Egyptian university, and there came to lecture to its students in its evening classes professors and orientalists from different parts of Europe, diffusing knowledge and science among students from all quarters—students, teachers, sheikhs from Al Azhar, employees, and a number of persons, male and female, who had finished their instruction in schools and preferred to stay at home. And although the people and the provincial councils helped the authorities in opening and building elementary schools, the people and the middle classes in particular craved for primary and secondary schools. And when the Government would not open the doors of these schools sufficiently wide to admit their boys, they opened private schools of all descriptions, and the Provincial Councils vied with one another in building properly equipped schools for all grades of education except the higher. The well-to-do lost no time in sending their sons to the universities in Europe, especially France and England, to receive the higher education which was denied to them in their country. Hundreds of students flocked yearly to the Western universities, and it was these young men who laid down the foundation for that great revival of learning and nationalism which has distinguished Egypt in modern times.

The Government was thus constrained to follow the example of the well-to-do and send a few distinguished students on scholastic missions to English training colleges, and later on to English and European universities; but the great majority were sent to Europe by their parents in their attempt to escape the embargo placed by the Occupation on higher education.

Before touching on the more important material reforms we must bear in mind that at the beginning of the Occupation the people as a whole were dejected, downhearted and ashamed of their defeat. They were atoning for their sins by a complete resignation to their fate. Soon they became so absorbed in their material uplifting that they gave no time to politics. The thermometer had dropped from the boiling-point of militant nationalism to the freezing-point of materialism and icy fatalism. And when the fruits of reforms ripened, and the returns of the increased produce of the land filled the pockets of landowners and merchants with dazzling golden sovereigns, you could see the music and dance halls of Cairo nightly resplendent with lights, songs and girls, with the pick of the land from the city and the countryside alike all intent on drowning the sorrows and restrictions of the past in a welter of drink, laughter and debauchery. It was like the Restoration period in England after Cromwell, when people reacted against the severity of puritanism by indulging in pleasures and throwing off of all moral restraints!

It was well for the Occupation that during the first two decades of its existence it should find the country in such a state of political apathy that practically no obstacles impeded the work of the reformer. It was also well for the people that their political loss should be so counterbalanced by material profit, so that when recuperation began it found the system sane and sound, and capable of withstanding shocks and relapses that might come its way.

The material reforms which we are about to enumerate briefly owe their inception and accomplishment to two main factors: first, the men chosen to organise and to maintain those reforms, and second, the money supplied to finance them. With regard to the men, let us admit that England, at the outset, was careful to nominate to the leading posts of the administration in general and to the irrigation department in particular, highly qualified men of proved experience and of honest character. At their head was Sir Evelyn Baring, created Baron Cromer in 1892 and Earl in 1901. Although he began his career as an officer of distinction in the army, he proved himself to be a master of men, of singular financial and

administrative ability. When in 1877 he first came to Egypt as the English representative on the Caisse de la Dette he was only thirty-six years of age, but his outstanding qualities soon made him the most powerful personality on the Commission of Inquiry of 1878. He was appointed later Controller-General with his French colleague M. de Blignieres, but left the Egyptian service after a few months for India, to return in 1883, a year after the Occupation, as British Agent and Consul-General. He remained in that office for twenty-four years, during which time his name was closely associated with all reforms and events of importance in the history of Egypt. He eventually became the incarnation of English policy in Egypt and the epitome of all that was good and bad in the Occupation.

With Cromer the names of Edgar Vincent, the first financial adviser, of Colin Scott Moncrieff, William Garstin and Willcox, the famous irrigation engineers, will be remembered for the reforms they instituted. Sir Edgar Vincent was the originator of the reserve fund which in the end put Egypt's credit on a level with that of England and France. To have achieved that success after the country's imminent bankruptcy indicated a great talent for economy and financial administration.

In the first years of the Occupation the treasury was left by the Orabists in a hopeless state. Funds were needed to pay the indemnities granted to those who suffered losses during the riots and the bombardment, to defray expenses incurred in preparing military expeditions during the first years of the Mahdi revolution, and to finance certain reforms which were of vital importance to the State. To have declared the State insolvent as was done in 1879 would have entailed a new international hegemony inimical to English interests. All efforts were therefore concentrated on obviating bankruptcy. The British Agent had thus to curtail expenses by every means, and to insist on withdrawing from the Sudan in spite of strong opposition from Egypt and the outside world. Seeing that the fellaheen were hard hit by the heavy taxes with which they were burdened, it was strongly recommended to negotiate a new loan guaranteed by the Powers. For this reason an international conference was held in London in 1885 and a loan

of £E.9,000,000 was sanctioned. From that loan the sum of £E.1,000,000 was earmarked for irrigation works and a further sum of £E.800,000 was added in 1891. The Delta barrages were restored, canals were cleared, drains were dug, and water was so justly distributed and controlled that small landowners got their due share on an equal footing with big landowners. The results soon exceeded all expectations. The natural fertility of the land together with the proverbial patience and industry of the fellaheen responded to those reforms with amazing rapidity. In ten years' time the cotton crop increased threefold, the sugar produce more than trebled, and the cultivable area of land increased from a little over 4,500,000 feddans in 1881 to nearly 5,000,000 feddans in 1889. This increase in cultivable land gave more than a proportionate increase in products. For the Barrages raised the level of the water in the canals and made it easy for farmers to irrigate their lands in summer, thus making the land give two or three crops a year instead of the customary winter crop.

By 1888 the race against bankruptcy had been won and the revenue began to exceed expenditure. The surplus was at first claimed by the Caisse de la Dette, to be applied in the amortisement of the debt, but the English adviser came to the rescue. A decree was issued according to which the surplus should accumulate in what was to be called the Reserve Fund, and when that exceeded £E.2,000,000 then the reduction of the debt should begin. Thus it was possible, with the approval of the Debt Commissioners, to advance part of the money accumulated in the reserve fund for the construction of various public works of great utility. The reserve fund, which has become a permanent feature of the Egyptian budget, gradually increased until it amounted in 1906 to £E.11,055,000 besides the sum of £E.3,050,000 which stood to the credit of the Caisse de la Dette. The reserve fund amounted to £E.32,276,931 in 1935, besides £E. 2,950,000 for the service of the debt.

Then began the relief of the taxpayers. The land tax was reduced, the salt tax and the local customs or octroi duties on country produce, both of which taxes entailed great hardships to the poorest classes, were abolished. Other smaller and obnoxious local taxes were also cancelled. Only the tax on tobacco was increased. The customs revenue from tobacco far

surpassed the advantages that would accrue from its cultivation, so that in 1890 its cultivation was prohibited.

The increased produce of the land in consequence of the recent improvements in irrigation encouraged the authorities to launch in 1898 the grand scheme of the Assuan Dam, one of the biggest irrigation works in the world. It was completed, together with the Assiut Barrage, in 1902. The erection of the dam at Assuan made it possible to store part of the flood-water to be used for irrigation during the drought months of summer. The cultivable lands of Middle Egypt—about 500,000 feddans - were thus converted from the basin system to the perennial system. The cultivation of cotton on a large scale, which had been confined to Lower Egypt, was then introduced into Upper Egypt, and the cotton crop increased from 3,000,000 kantars in 1880 to 6,500,000 kantars in 1904. The value of cotton exports rose from £E.10,000,000 in 1880 to over £E.19,000,000 in 1904.

The success which attended the erection of the Assuan Dam and the Assiut Barrage encouraged the authorities to plan a series of similar great irrigation works to regulate the waters of the Nile and make the best use thereof. Thus barrages were constructed at Zifta in Lower Egypt and at Esneh in Upper Egypt. In 1912 the first heightening of the Assuan Dam by five metres was effected.

Then came the Great War of 1914 when all public works stopped. When Egypt became independent in 1922, the Egyptians pursued with zest and competence the ambitious programme of great irrigation works on the Nile, both in Egypt and in the Sudan. The Naga Hamadi Barrage, constructed in 1926, the new Mohammed Ali Barrages started in 1936, the Jebel Awlia constructed in 1938, give evidence of the vital importance which Egypt, in agreement with her great ally, attaches to the Nile waters.

But the excess of water proved in time to be as dangerous to the land as the want of it. The land became exhausted with two or three crops a year ; the subsoil water increased, and threatened the roots of plants owing to the presence of salts dissolved in it. The produce per feddan began to decrease, and landowners began to use artificial manure to feed their exhausted soil. Consequently, side by side with dams and

barrages the need for large-scale draining operations became necessary. The problem which is still confronting the authorities is how to maintain the perennial system of irrigation without detriment to the fertility of the land.

Of the other reforms, that of the army comes first. As a result of the defeat at Tel El Kebir and the consequent collapse of the Orabi movement, the Khedive issued on 19 September 1882 a decree of one article which "dissolved" the Egyptian army, and a new army had to be recruited. Several proposals were then submitted for examination. Some thought that Turkish and Albanian soldiers chosen with the approval of the Sultan would obviate the danger of another national rising. Some suggested purely Sudanese soldiers, and others recommended a mercenary army from the Levant to suit the international status to which the country was then drifting.

But when Lord Dufferin came to Egypt he wisely ruled out these and similar proposals, and reverted to the decision taken early in the century by Mohammed Ali of creating the army from among the fellaheen themselves. If the fellaheen had lately mutinied, it was due to the personal demerits of their leaders rather than through any fault of theirs. On the other hand, their previous history showed that, when ably led, they could prove themselves equal and at times superior to the famous Turkish soldiers. But the English were careful not to leave the soldiers completely under Egyptian officers chosen from among the debris of the Orabist army. British officers were therefore engaged in training and leading the new army.

The new army began with 6,000 men, meant at first to act as a new police force. But events in the Sudan soon made it urgent that a substantial Egyptian army should be formed. When the time should come for the reconquest of the Sudan, the campaign, so England planned, should be undertaken not by the British alone, nor by the Egyptians by themselves, but by both. Hence the speed with which the army was trained under men like Wood, Grenfell and Kitchener.

The officers soon won the confidence of the men and of their Egyptian colleagues. Battalions formed of Sudanese troops were added to the army, and by 1896 Egypt could boast of a

well disciplined army of about 25,000 strong. Their value as soldiers was soon demonstrated in the battles which they fought and won against the Mahdists in the Sudan.

But no sooner had the Sudan been restored than the army relapsed into a state of impotence which made the Egyptian army a mockery. Military cadets were often uncertificated. There was no college in which to qualify as staff officers. Military missions from Egypt to Europe were stopped. The equipment of the army was lacking in every respect and left much to be desired. The number of the forces decreased from about 23,000 in 1900 to about 12,000. The army remained within the region of 10,000 to 16,000 until the new era of complete independence opened in 1937, when improvements in the equipment began, and the number rose to about 42,000 in 1940. English officers were dispensed with, but an English military mission continued to assist the military authorities in their efforts to regenerate the army.

It must, however, be asserted that the spirit of devotion and discipline which pervaded the new army since its inception has always been remarkable. The old differences between Egyptian and Circassian officers that ruined the army during the pre-Occupation period were levelled and done away with for ever. They all became Egyptians, united by the strong bonds of nationality, language and aspirations.

In their internal administrative reforms, the English succeeded in principle but failed in details. Whereas in the reform of the law courts the English came to the conclusion that Egyptians with a sprinkling of a few European judges should form the mainstay of judicial authority, it was a pity that in reforming the internal administration with its permanent contract with the people, they should insist on degrading the mudirs and shaking their authority in the sight of their fellow countrymen by holding fast to the system of provincial English inspectors. It was obvious that, once the mudirs were well chosen from among qualified Egyptians of irreproachable character, there was no ground whatever for keeping English inspectors in the provinces to demonstrate daily to the inhabitants that they were strangers in their own houses!

The rivalry between mudirs and inspectors, and the grudge which the former bore to the latter, could not fail to breed that

suppressed antagonism which made the provinces the hotbed of the revolution of 1919.

One redeeming feature of the Occupation regime was the freedom of the Press. The people were left free to expound their views on various subjects, and to give vent to their feelings in the daily papers and periodicals, all published regularly and in abundance in Arabic. By this means the Government insured itself against underground machinations, and kept itself abreast of all views and complaints circulating in the country.

There were other reforms concerning law courts, assizes, prisons, sanitation and medical administration, the veterinary department, market-places, slaughter-houses, lunatic asylums, roads, and a host of other things covering all fields of civilised life in the country. In all these reforms the hand of the English official was uppermost ; but there were Egyptian collaborators of distinction, especially in the domains of law, medicine and education, who gave of their best for the success of the reform movement. But we are only concerned in this chapter with the most important reforms undertaken by the Occupation.

When in the second volume of this work the history of the rebirth of the new Egypt is written it will be shown how the Egyptian reformer, freed from the political trammels of the English Occupation and acting under the aegis of the benevolent rule of King Fuad and his son King Faruk, not only maintained, expanded and emulated English reforms, but also evolved a new line of far-reaching reforms designed to serve the interests of new Egypt in its leading role among its sister states of the Arab world.

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